

FEUDALISM IN NORTHERN INDIA (C. 700 - 1200 A.D.)

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ABSTRACT

Chapter I gives a brief account of the work already done by other scholars, the original sources which have been used by us and points out the import of the terms used in the present study.

In chapter II we discuss some of the important factors which led to the origin of feudalism in northern India.

Chapter III deals with the growth of feudal elements in the composition of the royal armies of the period and the dependence of the kings on the levies of their feudatories.

Chapter IV concerns the role of forts in the wars of the period.

In chapter V we deal with the growing tendency to remunerate state servants with feudal assignments and emphasise that royal kinsmen often received similar assignments for their maintenance.

In chapter VI we analyse the terms for various administrative units in the records of the period and point out the growth of feudal elements in the administration of the kingdoms.

Chapter VII attempts to determine the meaning of several

of the feudal titles appearing in the records of the period and demonstrates that there were many grades of feudatories.

In chapter VIII we discuss the import of the title pañcamahāśabda and the nature of this privilege, which was conferred by an overlord over persons from among his feudatories.

Chapter IX deals with the relations of a feudatory with his overlord, the rights he enjoyed, the control exercised by his overlord and the obligations which a feudatory owed to his overlord.

In chapter X we discuss all the available references to the existence of a sāmanta assembly or to the sāmantas functioning as a body.

Chapter XI focusses attention on the increased burdens of taxation which resulted from the feudalisation of state structure.

In chapter XII we call attention to the chivalric rules which guided the conduct of a warrior and some interesting customs which appear to be connected with feudal ideas of honour and dishonour.

In chapter XIII we attempt, on the basis of a comparison with the European Middle Ages, to determine whether the term feudalism is suitable for describing the institutions of the early mediaeval period in India.

The Appendix deals with the date of the Lekhapaddhati, which is found to reflect the institutions of the early mediaeval period.

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the United Kingdom with my husband who received a scholarship for the session 1960-61.

ABBREVIATIONS

- A.B.O.R.I. Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.
- A.R.S.I.E. Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy.
- A.S.I.- A.R. Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Reports.
- A.S.R. * Archaeological Survey of India, Reports by Sir A. Cunningham.
- B.S.O.A.S. Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies.
- C.I.I. Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.
- C.H.I. Cambridge History of India.
- D.H.N.I. Dynastic History of Northern India. By H.C.Ray.
- E.I. Epigraphia Indica.
- H.R.S. Contributions to the History of Hindu Revenue System. By U.N.Ghoshal.
- I.A. Indian Antiquary.
- I.B. Inscriptions of Bengal.
- I.C. Indian Culture.
- I.H.Q. Indian Historical quarterly.
- J.A.O.S. Journal of the American Oriental Society.
- J.A.S (L) Journal of the Asiatic Society, Letters.

J.A.S.B.	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
J.B.B.R.A.S.	Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.
J.B.O.R.S.	Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society.
J.E.S.H.O.	Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient.
J.I.H.	Journal of Indian History.
J.N.S.I.	Journal of the Numismatic Society of India.
J.O.H.R.S.	Journal of the Orissa Historical Research Society.
J.O.I.	Journal of the Oriental Institute.
J.O.R.	Journal of Oriental Research.
J.R.A.S.	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.
J.U.P.H.S.	Journal of the U.P. Historical Society.
Mbh.	Mahābhārata.
N.I.A.	New Indian Antiquary.
N.S.	New Series.
N.S.P.	Nirṇaya Sāgara Press.
P.I.H.C.	Proceedings of the Indian History Congress.
P.T.S.	Pali Text Society.
Rāj.	Rājataranginī.
Yāj.	Yājñavalkyaśmṛti.

CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

The period after the death of Harsha until the end of the twelfth century A.D., which we call the early mediaeval period, occupies an important position in the history of India. The period is of great cultural interest, especially as far as developments in the fields of Sanskrit literature and historiography, architecture, iconography and religion are concerned. In order to understand these developments the political and social background must be thoroughly studied. In this period we see the full development, the maturity and the beginning of the decay of the institutions existing in classical India. In order, therefore, to understand the conditions in India one cannot afford to neglect the study of early mediaeval India.

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1. For the sake of convenience in study we prefer to divide Indian history into ancient, mediaeval and modern periods. The more usual division into Hindu, Muslim and British periods, though having some advantages of its own, is based upon wrong assumptions. In opposition to the proper mediaeval period which can be regarded as roughly covering the period from 1200 to 1757 we may describe the period 700-1200 as early mediaeval because in many respects the late period was only a continuation of the earlier one. See U.N.Ghoshal, Studies in Indian History and Culture, pp. 245ff.

This period is important also for other reasons. Its critical study may contribute to a better understanding of the institutions of the Sultanate period. The Turks and Afghans, after conquering northern India, made only minor adjustments in the administrative superstructure and retained the machinery in all its essential details, especially in the matter of local government and the collection of revenue. It is, therefore, essential that, to form a correct estimate of the administrative institutions under the Turks and Afghans rulers, the political institutions during the early mediaeval period should be studied with great detail.

Until recently, however, this period has not received its due attention from scholars. Those interested in the Muslim period concentrated on the period after A.D. 1206, while the students of ancient Indian history often neglected the period after Harṣa. Thus, the period between Harṣa and the Muslim invasions long remained ^a neglected period, which naturally fostered wide conjectures and wild statements. It is only recently that the scholars have started paying some attention to the study of its history. But even now a major part of the focus is on political history and cultural history

has yet to receive its proper attention.

Tod should be recognised as the pioneer in this branch of studies. In his Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan he for the first time analysed the history of the Rajput kingdoms and also studied their administrative and social institutions. But his account suffered from a lop-sided emphasis on bardic tales and traditions circulating in his times. He did not utilise the epigraphic records and the contemporary literary works which should form the basis for such a study. Tod has been followed by Pandit G.H.Ojha whose many books in Hindi on the History of Rajputana and some of its important mediaeval states reveal a sympathetic outlook on the martial glory of the Rajput kingdoms of mediaeval India. He also wrote a brief survey of the culture in mediaeval times but did not attempt a critical account of the feudal institutions.

The works of both Tod and Ojha put an exclusive emphasis on Rajasthan and there was no attempt to correlate the institutions of this area with other parts of northern India, which, at least in the early mediaeval period, presented similar

1. Madhyekālīna Bhāratiya Samskriti.

similar patterns of polity.

H.C. Ray in his monumental work presented a judicious and comprehensive history of the dynasties of northern India in the early mediaeval period. He utilised the epigraphic records to present a detailed and authentic account of the political history. It was highly desirable that following this lead an account of the social, economic and political institutions as gathered from epigraphic sources and elaborated in the light of the literary works, not excluding the bardic traditions, should be attempted. With his vast knowledge of the rich fund of source material for this period, unusual for any other period of ancient Indian history, Dr. Ray was eminently fitted to present such an account. He actually did plan such a scheme and in the preface (1930) to the first volume of his above-mentioned work he announced that its third volume, which was in course of preparation, would deal, among other things, with administrative, economic, social, and religious history, coins, the origin of the Rajputs and the causes of the decline and downfall of the Hindu dynasties in northern India. It should be regretted that even during

30 years he has not been able to complete his work.

C.V.Vaidya in his Decline of Hindu Mediaeval India outlined the cultural conditions also, besides discussing the political details. But his treatment of the feudal institutions is highly sketchy and unsystematic.

It is difficult to understand why the works devoted to a study of the period never aimed at analysing the feudal institutions on the basis of all the available sources and were satisfied to make general observations. Even the most recent work on the period, the fourth and fifth volumes of the History and Culture of the Indian people, prepared by a number of eminent Indian scholars in collaboration, takes hardly any cognisance of the feudal institutions of the early mediaeval period.

Feudal or semi-feudal institutions and terms relating to them were studied by many prominent scholars such as Vogel, Kielhorn, Mirā^shi, R.D.Banerji, Ishwari Prasad, Ganguly, B.Sen, Tawney, Sir Aurel Stein etc. etc., but none of these scholars has undertaken a systematic study of the subject, although their work made such a study possible.

Certain recent works on the history of the different

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 dynasties incidentally take note of the feudal institutions disclosed in their sources. D.Sharma in his Early Chauhan Dynasties and A.K.Majumdar in his Chaulukyas of Gujarat have collected some interesting material on the nature of feudalism under these dynasties. But these authors do not undertake a study of the numerous aspects and problems connected with feudalism.

After we had started to study this subject B.P.Mazumdar brought out his Socio-Economic History of Northern India, covering the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the first chapter of which deals with feudalism. Without minimising the importance and value of research works covering smaller periods of history, we believe that in the case of institutional studies it would be better to undertake a broader study in order to arrive at a better understanding and more compact picture. Dr. Mazumdar often does not make due allowance for the possibility of regional variations in the patterns of feudalism. Moreover, he is completely silent about the role of forts and does not emphasise the impact of feudalism on the revenue system.

R.K.Chaudhury¹ has recently produced a study of feudalism but it is to be observed that his treatment is highly sketchy and superficial. He does not analyse the different aspects of feudalism nor does he attempt to trace its development. At times he indulges in mere cataloguing, which again is also incomplete.

We have received much incentive and also information from two learned papers by Professor R.S.Sharma on Origins of feudalism² and Landgrants to officers and vassals.³ He allows margin for regional variations and analyses the relevant evidence thoroughly and judiciously. We have followed his lead and tried to present a fuller and more compact picture of the different aspects of feudalism. It should, however, be added that in the first of his two articles mentioned above he over-simplifies some issues and sometimes also shows some bias in favour of certain views.

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In this connection it should be made clear how the term feudalism is used in this study. As pointed out by R.Coulborn,⁴

1. J.I.H., XXXVII.385ff; XXXVIII.193ff.

2. J.E.S.H.O., I.297ff.

3. Ibid., IV.70-105.

4. Feudalism in history, pp.4f.

"Feudalism is primarily a method of government, not an economic or a social system, though it obviously modifies and is modified by the social and economic environment. It is a method of government in which the essential relation is not that between ruler and subject, nor state and citizen but between lord and vassal". The two important features of feudalism which are implied in this usage of the term are (1) the holding of land on condition of services either administrative or military, and (2) a personal relation of loyalty between vassal and lord. As pointed out by W.J.H. Sprout¹ either of these may be stressed at the expense of the other, or both may be equally important.

As will appear from this study, only if feudalism is used in a loose ~~x~~ sense the term can be applied to Indian institutions of the early mediaeval period.² In India many details of feudal institutions remain vague. We use feudalism in a less precise sense than that usual in European Middle Ages. Generally feudalism is taken to refer to fragmentation of

1. Sociology, p.63.

2. See infra p

political authority,¹ the rise of a landed aristocracy, the practice of land or revenue assignment to state officers in lieu of salary² and a chain of relationships between subordinates and their immediate overlords.³ As these general features appear in India and as European feudalism itself reveals wide diversity,⁴ there should not be any objection against using the term feudalism. But as one may be led to overlook the differences between Indian and European institutions it should be emphasised that the term is to be qualified as quasi-feudalism or may be described as 'sāmanta system'. It must, however, be remembered that in the latter case system should not be taken to imply systematic and well organised conditions.

For the sake of clarity we may define some of the terms which occur frequently in our account.

Vassal is a term of feudal law and denotes the tenant and follower of a feudal lord. According to feudal law the vassal owed certain duties to the lord; he promised fidelity and service. As we have pointed out subsequently⁵ in India in

1. M. Bloch, Feudal Society, p. 441.

2. Ibid., pp. 443, 444.

3. Ibid., p. 444.

4. Ibid., pp. 441, 445, 447.

5. See *infra* p.

in the early mediaeval period there is no indication that the chiefs of subordinate status took any oath of fealty. The use of the term vassal for describing the relations, between the subordinate rulers and their overlords may give a wrong impression about the institutions as it existed in India, because of the association with it of the practice of oath of fealty in European society. Hence we have preferred not to use the term vassal.

For our purpose we use the term feudatory. Though strictly speaking it would also refer to a subordinate state according to feudal law, the concept of the oath of fealty does not necessarily go with it as the term is used for a subordinate state in general.

The term tributary also is often used as a common term for a subordinate state, but in contrast to the other terms noted above, it has a clear association with the obligation of tribute.

In a feudal context lord is the usual term for a feudal superior, and particularly for a feudal tenant holding his fief directly under the king. With a view to avoiding

confusion we have generally used the term overlord while discussing the relations between two states one of which exercised a superior authority over the other.

In feudal usage suzerain is directly associated with vassals. We have, therefore, refrained from using the term in our account as it may recall certain features which are closely associated with vassal-suzerain relationship in European feudalism but seem to have been absent in India.

A basic term in a study of feudalism is fief. It is used to refer to a feudal estate in land or land held from a superior. In Europe fief was usually land, but could have been any desirable thing, as an office, a revenue in money or kind, the right to collect a toll, or operate a mill. In early mediaeval India also we find that sometimes the right to a specific share in the revenue from a certain piece of land or village was granted. But we mostly use the term in its usual association with land. Fief, strictly speaking, refers to the service tenure instead of a salary. In India, however, we find that land was often given to brāhmanas and religious bodies and also as a reward to a state officer, or any individual, by the king who was pleased with him for some reason.

In order to avoid the confusion resulting from a strict use of the term we have chosen to use the general expression feudal assignments.

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The period with which this ~~x~~ study deals is comparatively rich in sources. Although there are not so many texts specifically connected with feudalism in ancient India, incidental information may be gathered even from the most unexpected text. As it will cover much space even to briefly mention all the literary works utilised here, only some of the important ones can be discussed.

In this period, as in the ancient history of India in general, inscriptions are the main source. The importance of epigraphic sources for reconstructing the history of ancient India need not be emphasised. Being contemporary records they give trustworthy information on the conditions of their times. The certainty about their date, mostly given in the records and in some cases deducable from their internal evidence and paleographic considerations, increases their value. There are a few inscriptions which record the building of temples and such religious acts, but give the history of the family of the donor. From these we get valuable evidence about the

status of high officers and ministers though here we have to be cautious in evaluating the prasasti type of narrative. The land-grants yield valuable information about the revenue system, the administrative machinery and the different grades of feudatories. Some of the charters which were issued by the feudatories reflect on their status and power vis-a-vis their overlords. Of the early mediaeval period numerous inscriptions have been preserved. But after Kielhorn and Bhandarkar no attempt to prepare a list of all these inscriptions has been made. V.V.Mishra has edited the inscriptions dated in the Kalachuri era in the fourth volume of the Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum. N.G.Majumdar and P.N.Bhattacharya have edited the inscriptions respectively of Bengal and Assam but they need revision and are to be made up-to-date. Similar works about the inscriptions of other areas are also to be brought out.¹

The study of coins of the early mediaeval period has been even more neglected. After Cunningham's work Coins of Mediaeval India of 1894 there has been no systematic attempt

1. Vogel's work on the inscriptions of the Chamba states Antiquities of Chamba State Vol. I is a masterpiece and his copious notes are helpful in understanding inscriptions of other areas.

to analyse the coins of different regions and dynasties in northern India. Not only their metallic analysis, even the different types of coins of the period have yet to be presented in the form of a catalogue. It is hoped that the Indo-Sassanian series or the gadahiyā coins and the bull and horseman series of the Śāhi kings, if studied properly, may yield some information on the right and prerogative to mint coins in our period. As regards the coins one has therefore to rely besides the above-mentioned work of Cunningham, on the Catalogue of coins in the Indian Museum by V.A. Smith and on stray articles mostly in the Journal of the Numismatic Society of India.

As may be expected, the foreign accounts do not prove to be of great help in the study of Indian feudalism. The early Arab accounts are concerned mostly with trade but from some stray references one may get some idea about the composition of the army and of some feudal institutions. Al-Bīrūnī records much interesting information about Indian institutions in his time, but unfortunately he took no interest in feudal institutions or even in polity or administration in general. More important for our purpose are the accounts about the establish-

ment of Muslim power in India, including those about the Arab conquests in Sind and the Ghasni and Ghūrī invasions. It is however to be remembered that these accounts sometimes have a tendency to exaggerate or minimise the importance of Indian conditions in order to glorify the conquering arms of mighty Islam.

Among the works on law, polity and administration belonging to our period and reflecting conditions in northern India we have used Medhātithi's commentary to Manu and the Kṛtya-kalpataru of Lakṣmīdhara. Medhātithi is assigned to the period somewhere c. 825 and 900 A.D.¹ and was a northerner, probably a Kashmirian.² His commentary at places notices the characteristic institutions of its period, especially where they are not specifically covered by Manu's statements. Lakṣmīdhara, the compiler of the Kṛtyakalpataru, was a minister for peace and war under the Gāhādāvāla king Govindacandra. His Kṛtyakalpataru is a huge work in 14 voluminous kāṇḍas of which the Rājadharmakāṇḍa is the most important for our purpose. The Kṛtyakalpataru is a digest in the form of long quotations from earlier works such as smṛtis, Epics and the Purāṇas.

1. Kane, History of Dharmasāstra, I p.275.

2. Ibid., pp.269f.

Though his work does not possess any claim to originality, we can very well find out the practice under the Gāhaḍavālas and the opinion accepted by Lakṣmīdharan from the particular verses which he selects from the existing works on any subject and thus gives them an emphasis and also by the short comments which he adds in some cases.

Some of the Purāṇas also contain sections on polity and administration but a good deal of work has still to be done on Purāṇic studies, and as the dates of the composition of the different sections in individual Purāṇas are not known for definite it is not safe to utilise their material. However, Dr. Hazra has convincingly shown that the section on Rāja-dharma was incorporated into the Agni Purāṇa in the ninth century.¹ We have therefore used information from this section of the text to compare them with other evidence.

The Rājanītiratnākara was composed by Caṇḍeśvara Mīra in Mithilā in the early years of the fourteenth century. It is a small work based on quotations from earlier authorities but Caṇḍeśvara gives explanatory notes to make his opinion clear. We have utilised the evidence from this text because

1. Age of Imperial Kanauj, p.202.

the traditions of Hindu feudalism are known to have long survived in Mithilā.

The Sukranīti is treated by B.K.Sarkar as representing the Hindu concept of sociology. Though it deals with morals also it is mostly a book on polity (rājanīti) and discusses other allied subjects only incidentally. It has significantly new information on feudal polity. Generally scholars regard it as a text of the early mediaeval period, most probably of the eleventh or twelfth century.¹ Professor V.Raghavan has doubted the authenticity of this text.² Recently Dr. Gopal³ has shown that the present text was composed in about c.1850 A.D. by some man who had an intimate knowledge of the East India Company's regulations of the first quarter of the nineteenth century and was familiar with Maratha history and institutions. It would, therefore, follow that the feudal institutions as represented in this text cannot be taken to refer to the early mediaeval period but might reflect Maratha institutions. For

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1. A.S.Altekar, State and Government in ancient India, pp.19f; U.N.Ghoshal, A History of Indian Political Ideas, pp.494f; B.P.Mazumdar, Socio-Economic History, Preface, pp. x-xi.
 2. Presidential Address to the XXI All-India Oriental Conference p.16.
 3. The Sukranīti - a nineteenth century text to be published in B.S.O.A.S., XXV Part 3.

this reason we have not used the evidence from the Sukranīti in the body of our account but have referred it to the foot-notes for making comparisons.

Although the Abhidhānacintāmaṇi or the Mānasollāsa, a work attributed to the Western Cālukya king Someśvara III (A.D. 1126-1138) of Kalyāṇī, strictly speaking belongs to a region outside the geographical limits of our study, we have utilised the text because ~~it~~ in some respects generally speaking the feudal institutions in the Deccan did not differ from those in northern India. This is an encyclopaedic work dealing in five prakaraṇas of twenty chapters^t each with a hundred different topics connected with the royal household and royal court. Leaving aside valuable incidental references in other parts, the second prakaraṇa deals with polity, and some aspects of private law and inter-state relations.

Among the historical works of our period utilised by us the Rājataranginī deserves a prominent~~t~~ mention. It was composed by Kalhana in the middle of the twelfth century and covers the history of the kings of Kashmir from early times to his own day. Though at times Kalhana reveals an inclination to be influenced by beliefs, supernatural elements and

fate, he is an acute and critical observer of the conditions of his time¹. His analysis of the feudal practices of his times give us a clear idea of the weaknesses in the administrative machinery of Kashmir, which resulted from the feudal tendencies. The continuation of Rājatarāṅginī by Jonarāja is a useful supplement to the information given by Kalhapa. For the study of the working of feudal forces in Bengal we have used the Rāmacarita of Sandhyākaranandin. In this work the story of Rāma and that of Rāmapāla are told simultaneously. The main theme of the text is the successful revolution in north Bengal, the murder of Mahīpāla II and the restoration of the paternal kingdom by Rāmapāla, though the narrative continues even after Rāmapāla's death, and ends with Madanapāla.

Besides these we have utilised other historical poems of our period which throw incidental light on our subject. Of these the Navasāhasāṅkacarita written by Padmagupta or Parimala early in the eleventh century describes in eighteen cantos the life of king Sindhurāja Navasāhasāṅka of Malwa. Bilhana

1. See Professor A.L.Basham's article on Kalhapa's Rājatarāṅginī in Historians of South Asia edited by Professor C.H.A.Philips.

in his Vikramāṅkadeva-carita eulogises the achievements of his patron king Vikramāditya VI, the Cālukya king of Kalyāṇa, adding in the last canto an account of himself, his family, his country and its rulers. The victories of the Cāhamāna king Prthvīrāja over Siḥāb-ud-dīn Ghūrī forms the theme of the Prthvīrājaviḥjaya which is unfortunately unfinished. It belongs to the end of the twelfth century and was most probably composed by the Kashmirian Jayānaka. The Sukṛtasāṅkīrtana of Arisimha belongs to the thirteenth century and is in praise of Vastupāla, a minister under the Vāghela dynasty of Gujarat. Hemacandra narrates the life of the Cālukya king Kumārapāla in the Kumārapāla-carita, also called Dvyaśrayakāvya from its being both in Sanskrit ~~as~~ and Prakrit or because besides its historical theme it aims at illustrating the rules of grammar.

Here we may refer to two allegorical plays which are connected with contemporary historical facts. The Prabodha-candrodaya, written by Kṛṣṇamiśra towards the end of the eleventh century, commemorates the victories of the Candella king Kīrttivarman. Likewise the Moharājaparājaya written by Yaśahpāla is connected with the beneficent regulations made

by king Kumārapāla under the influence of Jainism.

The Jain Prabandhas are also to be regarded as semi-historical works. They deal with historical personages though mostly in the form of legends and anecdotes. Much historical information is found to have been traditionally handed down among the Jainas. We have casually utilised the Prabandhakosa of Rājasekhara Sūri, and the Purāṇa-prabandha-saṅgraha. But we have mostly tapped the Prabandhacintāmaṇi of Merutunga completed in A.D. 1306. It is not far removed from the period of our study and thus preserves much of the feudal practices and institutions of our period. The work is divided into five prakāśas each of which contains several prabandhas. A great part of the text deals with historical facts very near to the author's own time and hence we can utilise the social and institutional information in the text with profit. Most of the stories are about the Caulukya kings of Gujarat, the Paramāra kings Muñja and Bhoja, the Vāghela kings Lavaṇaprasāda and Vīradhavalā and the two ministers of the latter, Tejahpāla and Vastupāla.

Among the story books of our period the Kathāsaritsāgara of Somadeva and the Brhatkathāmañjarī of Kṣemendra have not been largely drawn upon because it is difficult to be sure of

the extent to which they improve upon the original Bṛhatkathā of Guṇāḍhya. We have utilised the Bṛhatkathākośa of Harisena and the Kathākośa of an unknown writer. These contain interesting references to feudal institutions.

Some of the Sanskrit and Apabhraṃśa romances of our period which have useful information on our subject are generally not much taken into consideration. We have found interesting references and graphic descriptions of considerable importance in the Tilakamañjarī. This is the work of the Śvetāmbara Jaina Dhanapāla who wrote under Muñja Vākpatirāja, king of Dhārā (c. A.D. 974-994)¹. The Tilakamañjarī is an elaborate tale of the love and union of Tilakamañjarī and Samaraketu in a style imitating Bāṇa. Another prose romance of our period which consciously follows Bāṇa as the ideal is the Udayasundarī-kathā of Soḍḍhala who belonged to the Vālabha-Kāyastha family of Gujarat. The work was most probably composed between A.D. 1026 and 1050. It is ~~in~~ in eight ucchvāsas and narrates the fictitious story of the love and marriage of Udayasundarī, daughter of the king of the Nāgas, and Malayavāhana king of

1. S.N.Dasgupta, History of Sanskrit Literature, pp.430f.

Pratiṣṭhāna.

Dhanapāla, the author of the Apabhraṃśa romance Bhavi-
sayattakahā, was a Digambara Jaina, unlike the author of the
Tilakamañjarī. Though there is no definite evidence to fix
the date for the composition of this work, Jacobi assigns it
to the tenth century A.D. It is a poem in twenty-two sandhis
and narrates the trade adventures and also political rise of
a merchant who along with his mother had to suffer from poverty
on account of the jealousy of his step-mother and step-
brother.

We may here refer to some other works which we have
utilised. The Triṣaṣṭīśālākāpuruṣacarita of Hemacandra is a
collection of stories of 63 eminent personalities in Jaina
history and tradition. The Naiṣadhaacarita is the work of
Śrīharṣa who is taken to have flourished under the Gāhaḍa-
vāla kings Vijayacandra and Jayacandra in the second half
of the twelfth century. In twenty-two cantos the work deals
with the well-known story of Nala and Damayantī but does not
go ahead of their romantic marriage and the advent of Kali
in Nala's capital.

More valuable than the Kāvyas based on traditional themes
are the satirical works of our period in as far as they aim
at exposing the characteristic weaknesses and follies in the

society of the times and thus present a cross-section of society. The Laṭakamelaka is a farce in two acts and, as its title suggests, describes the assembling of roguish people typical of the times at the house of a go-between for winning the favour of her daughter. Of these characters the one of special significance for us is the cowardly village headman Saṃgrāmaṇisara, and his sycophant Viśvāsaghātaka. The work was composed by Kavirāja Śaṅkhaḍhara under the Gāhaḍavāla king Govindaśandra in the first half of the twelfth century. Vatsarāja, the minister of the Candella king Paramardideva (A.D. 1163-1203), is credited with the authorship of six plays known as Rūpakṣaṭka. Four of these (Kirātārjunīya, Samudramathana, Rukmiṇīharana and Tripuradāha) are mythological plays based on well-known traditional themes. They are useful in presenting the chivalric ideal. The remaining two - Karpūracarita and Hāsyacūḍāmaṇī - are comic plays. The Kashmirian Kṣemendra who belonged to the middle of and second half of the eleventh century and wrote in the reigns of king Ananta and his son Kalāśa is a master in presenting satiric sketches. He has many such works to his credit the most important of

which are Narmamālā, Darpadalana and Kalāvīlāsa. They represent the life of the officers and petty chiefs, their corrupt and oppressive ways.

We get some incidental references in the anthologies of our period. F.W.Thomas had previously published an anthology from a Nepalese manuscript in Nepali characters of about the twelfth century and conjecturally put the title as Kavīndra-vacanasamuccaya. But D.D.Kosambi has brought out a better edition of the same text, which he rightly identifies as the Subhāṣitaratnakōṣa of Vidyākara. The Śārṅgadhara-paddhati, compiled by Śārṅgadhara in about A.D. 1363, differs from ordinary anthologies in the sense that the subjects on which verses have been collected in it are not of literary interest alone but also include topics which attracted the attention of a man of the aristocracy in those times. Incidental references can also be found in the Dohākōṣa which contains the Dohā verses of Buddhist saints such as Sarahpāda, Kapahpāda and others.

We have derived material also from the contemporary lexica. Of these more important ones are the Deśīnāmamālā and Abhidhānacintāmaṇi of Hemacandra, the Vaijayantī of Yādava

Prakāśa and the Narmamālā. The recently published Uktivyakti-prakarana of Dāmodara Paṇḍita, who wrote under the Gāhaḍavāla king Govindacandra, has interesting references in the institutions. The verses quoted as illustrations by Hemacandra in his Prākṛta-Vyākaraṇa also give us an insight into some aspects of feudal society.

The Aparājita-preśhā of Bhuvanadeva is an architectural text generally assigned to the twelfth century. It has very valuable evidence on the grades ~~and~~ of feudatories and feudal chiefs. It speaks of specific types of houses, thrones and other objects ~~for~~ these different grades. The Samarāṅgaṇa-sūtradhāra of Bhoja is also an architectural text but it appears that in describing the machines and mechanical objects of different use the author lets his imagination loose and they do not represent actual objects in use in those times. This diminishes its importance but as the references to feudal chiefs are only incidental they have been utilised. The Yuktivyaktikalpataru which is also ascribed to Bhoja is in the nature of a compendium of general knowledge useful for a prince. It thus partakes of the nature of the Mānasollāsa

though it can hardly have any claim to the volume of the latter text.

The Varṇa-ratnākara of Jyotirīśvara Kavisekharācārya is also in the nature of a compendium. But it is descriptive and contains graphic and detailed sketches of many important aspects of the social life of its time. The work was composed in Mithilā in the early part of the fourteenth century. But it is not at all affected by Muslim influences and so can be utilised to describe the institutions existing in northern India in the early mediaeval period.

Last, but by all means very important, is the Lekha-paddhati which we discuss in the appendix.

CHAPTER II - ORIGINS OF FEUDALISM

Any investigation into the factors leading to the rise and growth of feudal tendencies in ancient India is necessarily handicapped by the paucity of relevant material for earlier times. A modern writer on the subject tried to find in India, during a period not long before the Mauryas, a feudal organisation of society like that in mediaeval Europe with a large number of petty estates, the owners of which were like feudal lords controlling the destiny of the country in every sphere.¹ But the arguments advanced by him do not lend support to this view.² A study of the evidence indicates that feudal tendencies are first clearly noticeable towards the end of the Gupta period and develop fully after the age of the Guptas.³

Because of the paucity of relevant material we cannot maintain a strict chronological sequence in discussing the origin and growth of feudal tendencies in earlier periods. We, therefore, do not attempt to make a vertical study of the question and have to study it horizontally and discuss the

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1. Pran Nath, Economic Condition of Ancient India, pp. 2, 6, 120.
 2. K.A.N. Sastri in J.O.R., IV.241ff.
 3. J.E.S.H.O., I.297-327.

important factors for the origin of feudalism and trace their nature and their effects. The main factors leading to the origin of feudalism in northern India which will be discussed below appear to be : the ideal of dharmavijaya, foreign invasions, land-grants to officers and brāhmanas, the rise of clan monarchies¹, the centrifugal tendencies which weakened central power, the need for protection and the growth of the influence of local chiefs, and the emergence of a self-sufficient and natural economy.

Among the factors leading to feudal conditions in India the tradition of dharmavijaya is of great importance. According to this ideal the territories of the defeated kings were not annexed to the empire of the victor but the latter reinstated these kings and did not interfere with the customs and laws of their kingdoms as long as they accepted subordination and paid tribute. This method had the double advantage of satisfying the lust of conquest and of protecting a certain degree of local autonomy which was necessary for efficient administration in those days. The ideals of empire, even in the Vedic age, imply the existence of a sovereign king and his

^{154 f.n. 1}
1. See *infra* p. 1 for the meaning of the expression.

subordinate rulers.¹ This ideal can be traced in the Mahābhārata especially in the two digvijayas of Duryodhana and Yudhiṣṭhira.² The Buddhist texts also advocate a policy of dhammavijaya with the difference that conquest in that case was not the result of a show of military strength.³ The Arthasāstra differentiates between dhammavijaya and lobhavijaya or asuravijaya.⁴ Aśoka details in his inscriptions his policy of dhammavijaya.⁵ The formation and growth of the Magadha empire would, however, suggest that actual practice did not always conform to the ideal. After the Mauryas the ideal of dharma-vijaya seems to have gained in popularity as may be gathered from several instances of the performance of the śāvamedha in this period.⁶ Manu⁷ also requires a conqueror to install in

1. Vedic Index, II.433.

2. See Mbh., II.45. Also ibid., II.25.3.

3. Dighanikāya, III p.625; Jātaka, V.316.

4. XII.1.

5. Select Inscriptions, pp. 37, 46, 21, 18. Aśoka's dhammavijaya, however, means victory of the dharma (dharma eva jayati) and not victory according to dharma (dharmaenaiva jayati).

6. E.g., Puṣyamitra Śunga, Guptamitra Śātakarṇī, Parāśarī-putra Sarvatāta, Vasīṣṭhiputra Śrīkṣēptamūla, Pallava Śiva-skandavarman, Kadamba Kṛṣṇavarman and Śālanakāyana Devavarman. In these cases it does not appear that the performance of śāvamedha meant annexing the territories of the defeated kings. The śāvamedha was only a formal show of the superiority of the performer and the neighbouring kings were required only to accept subordination without losing their territories.

7. VII.202.

the conquered territory a member of the defeated family. Though Samudragupta expanded the boundaries of the Gupta empire in northern India, his relations with the foreign powers, the boundary states and the kings of southern India¹ were based on the policy of dharmavijaya. The ideal of dharmavijaya finds an elaborate expression in the Raghuvamsha.² A study of the composition of the Gupta empire reveals that it was formed of states subdued in accordance with this policy of dharmavijaya³ and allowed to maintain their existence in some form within the empire. The growing feudal tendencies especially in its form of tributary system found a convenient support in this ideal. We can very well imagine the increasing number of tributary chiefs resulting from a persuasion of the policy. It is significant that Bāṇa in describing the digvijaya of Candrāpiḍa speaks of him as anointing rājaputras as local rulers from place to place.⁴ The wide prevalence of this policy

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1. It is, however, to be remembered that the principal reason for Samudragupta's adopting a different policy towards the Deccan was that he could exercise no effective control over areas too far away.
 2. IV.43, 37.
 3. Beni Prasad, State in Ancient India, pp.285ff.
 4. Kādambarī (Pārvabhāga) (N.S.P., 1948) pp.255f.

in the period receives a strong testimony from Sulaimān¹ writing in the middle of the ninth century. He observes : "When a king subdues a neighbouring state he places over it a man belonging to the family of the fallen prince, who carried on the government in the name of the conqueror".

The role of foreign invasions in the origin and growth of feudalism in India has not received sufficient attention. A recent authority does not take it into account², while another, without giving any reasons, brushes aside the problem by observing that foreign invasions did not play any appreciable part in the process of feudalisation.³ We learn from the history of feudalism elsewhere that in many cases foreign invasions had an important part in the creation of a landed aristocracy.⁴ We have seen that feudal tendencies appear first in the Gupta period and more clearly after the Guptas.⁵ It may be suggested that in India also the emergence of a landed aristocracy may be connected with numerous foreign invasions - the Greeks, the Śakas, the Pahlavas, the Kuṣāṇas and finally

1. Elliot and Dowson, I.7.

2. B.P.Mazumar, Socio-Economic History, pp.5-9.

3. Prof. R.S.Sharma in J.E.S.H.O., I.325.

4. G.Sjöberg in American Journal of Sociology, 1952, p.233.

5. See *infra* pp. 47-49, 53-56.

the Hūnas. Of these the period of the Hūna invasions fits in very well with the fact that feudal tendencies appear towards the close of the Gupta period and were accentuated in the troubled times in the post-Gupta period. It would appear that the feudal tendencies which were released by the earlier foreign invasions were held in some check by the Guptas but they reappeared with increased vigour after the invasions of the Hūnas. It must, however, be realised that curiously enough we do not find clear development towards feudalism in the period from c. 150 B.C. to 200 A.D. when India was continuously invaded. We wonder if the Jātaka reference and the tradition recorded in the Mahābhārata, Manu and Bṛhaspati, which we discuss subsequently¹, reflect the impact of the foreign invasions.

Some of the feudal practices in India would appear to have originated or in any case brought into prominence by the foreign powers. Thus the foreign invasions had an important part to play in shaping the later course of feudal or semi-feudal institutions in India. No doubt the conception of empire in India from very early times was based on the idea

1. See infra p

of subordinate rulers, but the tributary system, especially with grades of rulers one above the other, is to be noticed for the first time in association with the Śakas and Kuṣāpas. The relationship of overlord and ~~XXXX~~ feudatories, of mahā-kṣatrapas and kṣatrapas, is clearly testified to by the inscriptions of the Western Kṣatrapas of Ujjain. It is significant that a Jaina tradition preserves the memory of a Śaka king with his 95 feudatories¹. Moreover, the title of mahārājādhirāja which from the Gupta period onwards has been used in the inscriptions to indicate the status of a sovereign king was eventually the transformation of rajatirāja which is known to have been used by the Śakas². It has been suggested that the sāmanta conventions were also due to Śaka influences³. Direct evidence on this point is not available, but the fact that some of the sāmanta conventions appear earlier in the Allahabad pillar inscription associated with the Śaka kings whom

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1. Kālikācāryakathā, I.39ff, especially I.62 : The rest of the Śāhis established as their overlord that Śāhi to whom the Sūri had resorted, and themselves as feudatories enjoyed the pleasure of rulership :
Sūri-sāhi nivo tattha jāo sesā ya rāṇayā.
Agayā Saga-kūlāo viikkhāyā tena te sagā.
 2. Vakataka-Gupta Age, p.269.
 3. V.S.Agrawal, Harsacarita:eka samskritika adhyayana, p.217.

the inscription in order to eulogise Samudragupta mentions as his subordinates may be construed to support the suggestion. We are on a surer ground as regards the practice of assignments of land to members of the royal family. It is significant that the earliest reference to land-grants by members of the royal family, which may presuppose assignments to them, are to be found in the records of the Western Kshatrapas¹ and the Śātavāhanas.² It may be suggested that the Śātavāhanas copied the system from the Śakas with whom they had come into close contact for some periods, ruling as they did over areas which had been under the Śakas in earlier times.

Prof. R.S.Sharma³ does not attach much importance to the practice of the land-grants to state officers as a factor contributing to the process of feudalisation in India. But we feel that it was the change in the method of remunerating state servants which marked the transition ~~ex~~ to feudalism in India. It would appear that there was some earlier tendency also favouring this practice but it lay dormant during the period of the consolidation of imperial administration under

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1. E.I., VII no.7 (No.13); VIII no.8 (No.10).
 2. E.I., VIII no.8 (No.4).
 3. J.E.S.H.O., I.325f.

the Nandas and the Mauryas and found occasion to strengthen itself after the decline of the Guptas when imperial traditions slackened and gave a fillip to feudal tendencies. There are some Jātaka references to kings rewarding officers of the state with such grants¹, which possibly may refer to post-Mauryan times. A tradition preserved alike in the Mahābhārata² and the smṛtis of Manu³ and Bṛhaspati⁴ provides for payment to officials in charge of one, ten, twenty, hundred or thousand villages in terms of land. We feel that this injunction also reflects the conditions after the decline of the Mauryas when the breakdown of the machinery of imperial administration may have necessitated such a semi-feudal arrangement. The Arthasāstra⁵ seems to record ~~an~~ earlier tradition in as much as the administrative divisions postulated by Kauṭilya consist of groups of 800, 400, 200 and 10 villages. The chapter on the maintenance of people in the king's service⁶ makes it quite clear that the general practice was that the pay should

1. Cf. R.N.Mehta, Pre-Buddhist India, p.128.

2. XII.87.6-8.

3. VII.118-9.

4. XIX.44.

5. III.10; IV.4, 6, 13.

6. V.3.

be given in cash, with occasional benefits of provision. We get, however, a definite impression from the Arthasāstra that the system of land-grants to state servants was known to Kauṭilya but he, obviously in the interest of the new empire wanted to stamp out this practice. This is clear from the injunction in the Arthasāstra¹ to the effect that if the king is desirous to colonise waste land, he should make payments in money alone; and if he is desirous of regulating the affairs of all villages equally then he shall give no village to any of his servants. Elsewhere also he implies it when requiring the superintendent to record in his register the grant of land ^{to} among state servants by way of remuneration.² It appears from another chapter³ of the Arthasāstra that the grants of land were recommended only in special cases such as the colonisation of waste lands. But here also they are said to have been meant for small officials especially those connected with local administration like superintendents, accountants, gopas, sthānikas, veterinary surgeons, physicians, horse-trainers and messengers and then were not accompanied

1. Ibid.

2. II.35.

3. II.4.

with rights of complete ownership such as those of sale or mortgage.¹

On the other hand, after the Gupta period, when the beginnings of feudalism in India are noticeable, we see examples of officers being remunerated with land-grants. The testimony of Fa-hsien on this question is vague and has been translated differently by scholars.² Hsüan Tsang, however, leaves no doubt that in his time the earlier practice of payment in cash and kind had been largely replaced by the feudal practice of making grants. He observes that the ministers of state and common officials all had their portion of land and were maintained by the cities assigned to them.³ The extent to which the feudal practice had ousted the earlier method is indicated by Hsüan Tsang himself who notes that one-fourth of the royal land was earmarked for the endowment of great public

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1. Cf. Sukranīti, I.421-22. One should not give up even an angula of land in such a way as to part with rights to it; may, however, give away the persons for their maintenance, but so long as the receiver lives.
 2. J.E.S.H.O., I.301f. A recent translation by a Chinese scholar Ho Chang-ohun (Chinese Literature, 1956, no. 3, p. 154) may imply it when ~~he~~ it says that "the king's attendants, guards and retainers all receive emoluments and pensions.
 3. Watters, On Yuan Chwang, I p. 176.

servants.¹ This testimony of Hsüan Tsang for the time of Harṣavardhana receives significant corroboration from the Harṣacarita² in which Prabhākaravardhana is described as often partitioning out the earth for the support of his servants.

We can demonstrate this change in the method of remunerating state officers by a study of the epigraphic evidence. It is not without significance that we do not have any inscriptions of the earlier period recording grants of land made by a state official. In an inscription from Sanchi Āmrakārdava, a minister of Candragupta II, is said to have purchased a house-site for presenting it to a vihāra.³ Āmrakārdava here seems to act as a private person who uses his wealth to buy land and endow it to Sanchi vihāra. It is not a land-grant proper. Likewise the ten nivartanas of land, which according to the Tiwarkhed plates of Rāṣṭrakūṭa Nannarāja⁴ were granted jointly by a dharmakāśa (superintendent of religious affairs) and a mahāsāndhivigrahin (great minister for peace and war), obviously could not have been in the nature of land they received as remuneration from the state but had possibly to

1. Watters, Op. cit., I.176.

2. p.93 - Bhṛtyopayogāya vyabhajateva vasudhām bahudhā.

3. Select Inscriptions, pp. 273f.

4. E.I., XI.279.

be purchased by the two officers specifically for the purpose of charity. As against these we find that three inscriptions belonging to the second half of the sixth century and found at Soro in Orissa¹ record the grant of villages, two by a mahābalādhikṛtāntaraṅgamahāsāndhivigrahika² and a third by a mahāpratihāramahārāja.

It has been rightly suggested that from Gupta times the idea was gaining ground that territorial units were meant for the enjoyment of local governors and officers.³ The administrative units called bhoga and bhukti and the designation of the officers such as bhogika and bhogapatika, which are ultimately derived from the root 'bhuj' meaning both 'to enjoy' and to rule, suggest that territorial units were often meant to be enjoyed by way of remuneration by the governor under whose charge they were placed.

Professor R.S.Sharma⁴ maintains that the most important factor which contributed to the development of feudalism in

1. E.I., XXIII no.32 (B, C and D).

2. The expression is difficult to explain. Mahābalādhikṛta means 'great commander'. Antaraṅga refers to a class of royal servants very intimate with the king. Mahāsāndhivigrahika stands for the Great Minister for Peace and War.

3. J.E.S.H.O., I.302-4, 326.

4. Ibid., 325.

India was the practice of land-grants made to brāhmanas and religious institutions. He emphasizes two features of the grants, the transfer of all sources of revenue and the surrender of police and administrative functions, which paved the way for the rise of brāhmaṇa feudatories. It has been pointed out by him that some administrative rights were given up for the first time in the grants made by Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi in the second century A.D. and this feature was accentuated from the fifth century onwards.¹ This suggestion would not seem to have much positive force based as it is on the tacit assumption that these features did not exist in earlier periods for which unfortunately we do not have any specimens of land-grants. Besides the references in the early Pali texts to villages granted to brāhmanas, the Chāndogya Upaniṣad² mentions the gift of a village to Raikva by king Janasruti. In the Upaniṣad³ literature as also the early Buddhist texts⁴ we have many brāhmaṇa mahāsālas enjoying the revenue of lands granted to them by the king. The suggestion of Professor R.S.Sharma

1. Ibid., 298-300.

2. IV.2.4.

3. E.g., Chāndogya Upaniṣad, V.11.1.

4. P.T.S. Pali-English Dictionary, s.v., mahāsālā.

that the religious grants were the most important factor contributing to the development of feudalism in India can be accepted only if it can be demonstrated that the brāhmaṇa donees of the village grants~~s~~ made in earlier periods gradually developed as feudatories or else that in early mediæval period a village grant to a brāhmaṇa amounted in actual practice to his receiving the status of a feudatory chief and that the number of brāhmaṇa donees who are thus suggested to have become feudal chiefs was a force to be felt~~t~~ in the political life. Professor Sharma¹ refers to a grant of the Vākāṭaka king Pravarasena II² which lays down that the thousand donees brāhmaṇas can hold the village granted only on the condition that they commit no treason against the kingdom, do not slay brāhmaṇas, do not commit theft and adultery, do not poison kings, do not wage wars and do no wrong to other villagers to suggest that there was a tendency for some of the religious donees to indulge in the game of politics. But this is only a formal sanction and should not be interpreted to indicate any political designs on the part of the brāhmaṇa donees. It is, however, to be noted that the brāhmaṇa

1. J.E.S.H.O., I.299.

2. Select Inscriptions, p. 422 ll.40-43.

feudatories did not become important political and economic force in the early mediaeval period. In this period we meet many brāhmaṇas who had titles of ṭhakkura, rāṇā or rāuta prefixed to their names. But we are not sure whether their status as ṭhakkura etc. was due to their holding religious grants of villages. On the other hand some of the grants in which the donee brāhmaṇas appear without any of these titles do not indicate that the grant of the village carried with it the assumption of these titles. These land-grants no doubt created a numerous section of intermediaries. But by themselves they cannot account for the development of feudalism in India. We would interpret the importance of these religious grants not so much in themselves as in providing an example to their secular proto-types in shaping their nature and course of growth.

As is well known feudal polity of the early mediaeval period is dominated by clan monarchies. The history of Egypt reveals that during the political confusion following the decline of the old empire, there arose several military clans which brought about feudal conditions.¹ We can see in the rise

1. J.H.Breasted, A History of Egypt, p.156.

of military tribes and clans an important factor which accentuated feudal tendencies in India. Already at the end of the Gupta empire we find the Maitrakas established at Valabhī. The clan monarchies such as the Pratihāras, the Guhilotas, the Cāpas or Cāvaḍas, the Cāhamānas had arisen on the political horizon in the period between 650 and 750 A.D. The practice of making grants to members of the tribe resulted in fragmenting the resources of the state. This practice may be said to go back to the early centuries of the Christian era. It is significant that the records of the Western Kṣātrapas¹ and the Sātavāhanas² contain the earliest reference to assignments of land to members of the royal family.

The political chaos following the disintegration of the Gupta empire gave a fillip to the centrifugal tendencies. The rise of new powers in different areas reduced the control of the central authority and helped to strengthen feudal tendencies. The absence of a strong central authority and the resulting chaos, if allowed to continue for a long period, serve as congenial ground for the emergence of feudal tenden-

1. E.I., VII no.7 (No.13); VIII no.8 (No.10).

2. E.I., VIII no.8 (No.4).

cies. During the closing years of the Gupta empire we find many governors and military commanders gradually throwing away the yoke of dominance and carving out small dominions for themselves. We can get an idea of this process by taking note of some of the recorded cases. Thus the governor of Puṇḍravardhana becomes an uparikamahārāja from his original designation of uparika.¹ Mahārājas Lakṣmaṇa² and Subandhu³ and the Uccakalpas and Parivrājakas in the Bundelkhand region seem to pay scant regard to their Gupta overlord. The dynastic tables of the Maukharis, the later Guptas and the Vardhanas of Thaneshwar reveal that the later kings of these families became independent and assumed titles indicating their sovereign status. The Maitrakas who were originally military governors of Valabhī soon took titles indicating their claim to rulership which gradually was transformed to show an independent status. Yaśodharman who rose to prominence ~~perhaps~~ in the sixth century probably belonged to a family of rulers who were subordinates of the Guptas. These forces of disintegration were controlled for some time by the personality of

1. Select Inscriptions, pp. 284, 285, 324, 328, 338.

2. E.I., II.364.

3. E.I., XIX p.44.

Harṣa. But after him northern India relapsed into its earlier chaos. The Pratihāras succeeded in creating a more or less unified empire in northern India but their declining power once again released centrifugal forces bringing in their train petty local feudatories scattered over northern India.

A reason which helped the centrifugal tendencies and the growing feudalism was the practice of the Gupta kings to permit the office of the chiefs of districts and provinces often to vest in the members of the same family. It was quite natural for these officers to gather power and taking advantage of this weakness of the imperial family to establish themselves as independent rulers. We have already referred to the uparikas of Puṇḍravardhana, who enjoyed the post for some generations, later on claiming the position of a feudatory. We may cite the case of the Maitrakas also the first two members of whose family were military officers appointed by Gupta kings to rule the region¹ of Valabhī. But they soon

1. See I.C., V.409 for a discussion of the different theories about the overlord of the early Maitrakas. Bhaṭārka and his son Dharasena called themselves senāpati. The third member Dropasīpha is said to have been invested with the rank and title of mahārāja by his overlord. The subsequent members pay their allegiance to their overlord by describing themselves as paramabhattāraka-pādānudhyāta, which practice was discontinued by Guhasena (c. 556-567 A.D.).

came to style themselves as mahārājas or mahāsāmantarājas.

The weakening of the central power was accompanied by a natural increase in the power of local chiefs. This is reflected in some of the administrative functions slipping out of the control of the central power to its subordinate local officers and chiefs. From the Gupta times we notice a definite slackening of the central authority in its executive control over the people. Whereas the Arthasāstra¹ prescribes an effective machinery strictly maintaining a record of the people, their property and of the labour power,² Fa-hsien³ and Hsüan Tsang⁴ alike testify that families were not registered. It has been rightly suggested that this neglect on the part of the state to maintain records is to be explained by the fact that the state did no longer need it, as the collection of taxes from the peasants was no longer the concern of the central authority but had mostly become the function of feudatories.⁵

Professor R.S.Sharma⁶ deduces from the advice of Nārada⁷

1. II.35.

2. For Megasthenes see R.C.Majumdar, The Classical Accounts of India, pp.268-69.

3. S.Beal, Travels of Fa-hsien and Sung-yun, p. xxxvii.

4. Watters, Op. cit., p.176.

5. J.E.S.H.O., I.300f.

6. Ibid., 311.

7. X.4, 5, 7.

to the effect that a king should deal with those who oppose him and prevent the payment of taxes by the help of similar people that in this period "central authority was growing weaker and local lords stronger" and that "officials under the direct control of the state were incapable of dealing with certain powerful individuals who, in all probability, approximated to the status of feudal intermediaries". Professor Sharma has probably overlooked the context in which these passages occur. These are to be found in Chapter X of the Nāradaśmṛti which is called samayasyānapākarma and deals with the violation of compacts or conventions. Verse 1 of the chapter defines samaya as the rules (or conventions) settled among vrātas (heretics), naigamas and the like. Verses 2 and 3 provide that a king should enforce the conventions of pāṣaṇḍis, naigamas, śrenīs, pūgas, vrātas and gauras and protect their dharma, karma, traditional mode of conducting their business and their means of livelihood. The verses in question which follow these evidently apply to the conventions of these corporate bodies and are to be translated to mean that the king should annul those usages which are opposed to his own interest or the interest of people at large or be

detrimental to his finances; the king should prevent them from entering into intrigues, taking to arms or fighting among themselves.

The loss of royal monopoly over the possession of horses and elephants has been mentioned as a factor undermining central authority and bringing about feudalism in India.¹ We should prefer to interpret it more as the symptom than the cause of growing feudalism. Pali texts would indicate that even from early times horses could be owned by private individuals.² The dharmasūtra of Gautama³, reflecting pre-Mauryan times, in providing a fine for the owner whose horse causes damage implies that there were private individuals owning horses. It has further to be pointed out that the Arthasāstra does not put forth any definite claim for the royal monopoly of horses and elephants. The existence of the posts of the superintendents of horses and elephants can hardly be regarded as indicating a royal monopoly. Megasthenes's statement disagrees with Indian sources and is probably due to a mis-

1. J.E.S.H.O., I.308-10.

2. Anguttaranikāya, II.199 1.20; Dīghanikāya, II.174 1.29; Apadāna, p.387 1.3; Niddesa, I.145 1.19.

3. XII.24.

understanding. Thus for the earlier period we have only the testimony of Megasthenes for the royal monopoly of horses and elephants¹. It would be incorrect to base any view on the supposed loss of this monopoly in later times². We would say that the use of horses and elephants was a royal prerogative or a sign of rulership. As feudalism means an enormous increase in the number of those claiming to be rulers in the form of feudal chiefs we find more and more people claiming this privilege. In a Purāṇa text also we read that in the Kali age everybody possessing a horse claims to be the king³. It is obvious that the possession of horses and elephants by feudal chiefs must have vitally affected the military strength of the central authority. A statement in Nārada⁴ has been interpreted⁵ to indicate that in the Gupta period the owners of elephants and horses were regarded as protectors of the people and thus performed the function which was formerly

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1. McCrindle, Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian, p. 90.
 2. Medhātithi on Manu VIII.399 mentions royal monopolies over horses in the west and over elephants every where. But this has to be interpreted as a monopoly of export only, since Manu speaks about export.
 3. Brhannāradiya Purāṇa, XXXVIII.37 -
Asmin kaliyuge ghore sarvādharmaśamanvite.
Yo yo rathāśvanāgādhyah sa sa rājā bhaviṣyati.
 4. XI.32.
 5. J.E.S.H.O., I.310.

discharged by regularly appointed officers of the state. But we think that the passage does not establish the feudal tendency of local chiefs who regarded themselves as the protectors of the people. It is not the owners of the elephants and horses that have been called protectors of the people. The passage lays down that these animals are not to be beaten or harmed even if they cause damage because of their being protectors of the people,¹ apparently a recognition of their use for military purposes.

It has been pointed out that the need for protection did not lead to any considerable practice of commendation in India.² It is clear that the conditions in India were never as anarchical as in mediaeval Europe. Even then with the failure of the the central authority the need for local chiefs to provide protection against unsocial elements must have been felt.³

1. Adandya hastino'śvāsca prajāpālā hi te smrtāb.

Adandya garbhini gaṇsca sūtikā cātisarini.

2. J.E.S.H.O., I.340.

3. In the Ghatiyala inscription dated A.D. 861 (E.I., IX.280) Kakkuka, a Pratihāra king of Mandor, claims that he re-established a market-city depopulated by the menace of wild tribes and went to the doors of the people assuring them protection.

In India the tendency was to decentralise royal power and hence the creation of feudal chiefs has been mostly a process from above in the sense that the central authority conferred power to rule upon individuals, chiefs and officials. The strict method of commendation does not seem to have been much resorted to. But we need not minimise its importance. The Tibetan Dulva or Vinayapitaka¹ belonging to the early mediaeval period rightly reflects the change in the period. Whereas earlier Buddhist texts speak of government as originating as a result of people electing a single chief, the present text adds that people, because of the insecurity caused by theft, make the strongest among themselves the lords over their field. An eighth century inscription from Hazaribagh (Bihar)² records an actual example of the people of a village, with the king's approval, requesting Udayamāna a merchant on his way back to Ayodhya from his business trip to Tāmralipti, who protected them by paying to the king certain dues demanded of them, to become the rājā. Subsequently at the request of the inhabitants of two other villages, Udayamāna himself placed his two brothers Ajitamāna and Śrīdhautamāna at the head of their

1. W.W.Rockhill, The Life of the Buddha, pp.6-7.

2. E.I., II.345-47.

affairs. In literary works we have references to people founding a village or city and becoming its ruler.¹ If the account of the foundation of the Cāṣmāna dynasty of Nadol by Lakṣmaṇa as given in the Purātana-prabandha-saṅgraha² and Nainsi's Khyāt³ is to be believed it was the protection which Lakṣmaṇa afforded to the people of Nadol against the depredations of the Meḍas terrorising the country all around which led to his being accepted as the ruler of Nadol. According to the Khṛlīmpur inscription of Dharmapāla, Gopāla, the founder of the Pāla dynasty, was made to accept the hands of Lakṣmī by the subjects (prakṛti) who wanted to end the existing lawlessness (matsya-nyāya)⁴. Without entering into a discussion of the precise meaning of the terms prakṛti and matsya-nyāya and whether there was a regular election on this occasion or not, we can see in the reference that sometimes people with a view to remove the possibility of their being exploited or oppressed in the anarchical conditions of the early mediaeval times accepted a man as their ruler or chief if they found

1. Prabandha-cintāmaṇi, pp. 21, 32, 87.

2. pp. 101f.

3. I p. 152 q. by D. Sharma, Early Chauhan Dynasties, p. 121f.

4. E.I., IV. 248.

him strong enough to extend them the security and safety they needed. We do not have any similar reference for other parts of India.¹ But we can safely conjecture that similar situations existed in the case of some other ruling dynasties or chiefships. The account in the Khalimpur inscription is corroborated by the traditions recorded by Tārānātha, the Tibetan historian² though there are some differences as regards the way in which he was elected to put an end to the existing anarchical condition. Significantly enough Tārānātha records that "in Odivisa (Orissa), in Bengal and in the other five provinces of the east, each kṣatriya, brāhmaṇa and merchant constituted himself king of his surroundings, but there was no king ruling the country".

A recent study of the subject does not take any notice of the importance of economic factors in the origin and growth of feudalism in India.³ Feudalism affects economic life considerably and hence economic changes are to be treated as the consequences ~~in~~ of feudal institutions. But they are

1. Cf. Kāmarūpasāsanāvalī, p. 12 - Mātsyanyāya-virahitah prakāśa-ratnah.

2. I.A., IV.365f.

3. B.P.Mazumdar, Socio-Economic History of Northern India, pp. 5-9.

to be noticed because they symptomise and thus reflect the growth of feudalisation. Economic factors had a significant role in the sense that they tended to create an agrarian economy with self-sufficient economic units. Now, local economy is known to be helpful in the emergence of a feudal polity, especially of a landed aristocracy. Indian economy has no doubt been predominantly agrarian even during the Kuṣāṇa and Gupta periods when trade and commerce were in a flourishing condition. But comparatively speaking, the agrarian and local character of the economy in the early mediaeval period was more pronounced than in earlier times. It is significant to note that in his laws of partition Jīmūtavāhana¹ is not concerned with liquid resources, he treats property as consisting only of land and gold. We can note the change in the attitude of society towards coined money from the fact that in many of the inscriptions of the period the endowments are made even in important commercial cities not in the form of coins but in the form of land, buildings and shops.² The coins of the early mediaeval period are few and far between and

1. Dāyabhāga, p.8.

2. E.I., XIX.588ff.

generally are crude and highly debased. It is to be noted that the paucity of coins in common circulation of copper and other cheap metal as opposed to the gold coins appears to go back to the Gupta period.¹ Fa-hsien also testifies to the use of cowries instead of coins.² The wars between the feudatories and upcoming dynasties towards the end of the Gupta period and the Hūna depredations must have resulted in a general economic decline by affecting trade and commerce adversely, destroying cities and towns and ruining the middle class.³ Hsüan Tsang notices a number of ruined and depopulated cities in the seventh century. It may be suggested that the decline of Buddhism is not sufficient to explain all these cases. It is significant that the recent excavations at the site of some of the important ancient cities indicate a general state of economic decline in India after the Guptas.⁴

In a recent study of this problem the tendency towards feudalism and the emergence of self-sufficient economic units

1. J.E.S.H.O., I.324f.

2. (Legge) p.43.

3. J.B.B.R.A.S., 1951, p.45.

4. See Indian Archaeology, 1955-56, p.20 (Kausambi); A.S.I-A.R., 1906-7, pp.50f (Kasia); *ibid.*, oo.142f (Mathura).

has also been attributed to the fact that in the Gupta period irrigation also tended to become a local responsibility.¹

Without challenging the ultimate conclusion, which we have good reasons to support on other grounds, we feel that the position regarding irrigation has been over-simplified.

Irrigation would appear to have always been the joint concern and responsibility of the local population and the central power. The latter generally assisted in cases and projects which required large funds beyond the resources of the local bodies. Even in the Arthasāstra, which has been relied upon to establish the responsibility of the state in the earlier period, we find that local people often undertook such works themselves sometimes backed by the state with various forms of assistance.² In the Girnar inscription also it has to be noted that Rudradāman took up the repair of the embankment when it could not be done by the local people and was considered of great importance and urgency.³ Even in the early mediaeval period we have many references to the central autho-

1. J.E.S.H.O., I.325.

2. II.4; III.9, 10.

3. Select Inscriptions, pp.170f.

rity undertaking irrigation work. Thus the Rājatarāṅgiṇī¹ speaks of an important irrigation project undertaken under king Avantivarman to utilise the river Vitastā for irrigation. In the Uktiṣyaktiprakaraṇa², associated with the Gāhaḍa-vāla court, we have a reference to a state officer supervising the excavation of irrigational works. Significantly, Śrīdhara claims in his inscription that one of his ancestors was appointed by the Caulukya king Mūlarāja I to carry out the construction of irrigational works in his kingdom.³ A list of tanks and reservoirs constructed by kings of different dynasties in the early mediaeval period would run into pages.

In the above survey we have attempted to give, within the limit of the available material, the factors which led to the origin of feudalism. We have seen that the ideal of dharmavijaya favoured the establishment of feudatory powers. Foreign invasions are doubly important in this study; the destruction brought about by them created feudal tendencies and the foreign powers reveal the earlier prototypes for some

1. V.74ff.

2. p. 24 ll. 15-16.

3. E.I., II.438.

of the characteristic features of feudalism as it grew subsequently. The practice of remunerating officers by feudal assignments was an important factor. The religious grants created a numerous class of village lords; but they were more important as serving an example for secular land-grants. The weakness of the central power and the growth of local chiefs are reflected in the rise of military tribes, in governors becoming independent rulers, and in the slackening of executive control over people. The need for protection in the troubled times also led to the emergence of local chiefs. A self-sufficient and natural economy, which is usually a consequence of feudalism, reflects the growth of feudal tendencies and in turn helped its pace.

CHAPTER III - FEUDAL COMPOSITION OF ARMY

The growing importance of feudal elements in the composition of the empires in the period of our study could not but have vitally influenced the nature of their armies. We find that the kings came to depend on feudal levies and the numerical strength of the standing army was considerably reduced. This reflected and also affected the military power of the empires, which could not face any internal or external trouble with the meagre force at their command and had to seek support of the feudal chiefs.

Unfortunately the texts of our period¹ do not give detailed references to the expenses incurred in maintaining

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1. The Śukranīti I.631-36 recommends that rulers like sāmānta and above should spend $\frac{1}{4}$ of the income on maintaining the army. Elsewhere it advises (IV.7.47-58) that the ruler whose income is a lac of karsas should have every year one hundred reserve force of the same age, well-accounted and decently equipped with weapons and missiles, three hundred foot soldiers armed with lesser fire-arms or guns, eighty horses, one chariot, two large fire-arms or cannons, ten camels, two elephants, two chariots, 16 bulls, 6 clerks and three councillors. The ruler should every month spend 1500 karsas on contingencies, charities and personal wants, 100 on the clerks, 300 on councillors, 300 on wife and children, 200 on the men of letters, 4000 on the horsemen, horses and infantry, 400 on elephants, camels, bulls and fire-arms and save the remaining 1500 in the treasury. Cf. also *ibid.*, IV.7.707 : the king should increase the salary of the officers about a quarter in beginning expedition. Also *ibid.*, IV.7.783-85 : the king should have recorded the period served, rate of wages and the amount paid, how much has been paid to servants by way of wages and how much by way of rewards. He should receive the acknowledgements of their receipts and give them the form specifying wages.

armies. It is not known how the different military grades were remunerated.¹ There are certain indications to show that the ordinary soldier received cash payment from his employer. Thus the Śaṅkha-likhita quoted alike by the Kṛtya-kalpataru² and the Rājanītiprakāśa³ lays down that a soldier is to receive a monthly salary of two suvarṇas. In the mathematical text Gapitasārasaṅgraha⁴ we have rules about calculations of the cash (purāṇa) salary paid to mounted soldiers (ārohakas). Medhātithi⁵ is not very clear on this point. He states that the feudatories (maṇḍaleśvaras) fight for their own interest but not their subordinate soldiers (anuḥvivinaḥ) because the services of the latter have been secured by means of wages (bhṛtiparikṛitas). The term bhṛti can stand for wages or remuneration in general and does not necessarily mean cash

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1. The Nītiprakāśikā VI.33-42 mentions in terms of coined money the salary of the officers belonging to the different grades and sections in the army down to the soldier fighting on foot, the banner-holders and the bards. But the date of the text is not known and so it would not be safe to utilise it for our period. The references to fire-arms would suggest that it was composed in late mediaeval period.
 2. Rājadharmas, pp.84f.
 3. p. 252.
 4. V.95¹-96¹.
 5. On Manu, VII.89 (Vol. II p.29).

salary. The Agni Purāṇa¹ also contemplates regular salaries for soldiers, though in this case there is no specification about their being in kind or cash. It simply advises the king to make regular payment to troops, which is a factor of great importance contributing to the growth of a strong army. Lakṣmīdhara² in his commentary on the Śaṅkha-likhita passage referred to above makes it clear that the warriors ordinarily received remuneration in the form of wages (vetana) and presents (dāna).³ Those who had earned a name for their valour were awarded over and above these with garments and other such favours. The commentary also points out that the sons and other dependents of soldiers who lose their life in the course of the performance of their duty should be given pensions and other concessions (dayā) by the state. The term vetana by itself does not necessarily mean cash payment.⁴ It

1. CCXXXIX.31.

2. Kṛtya, Rājadharmā, pp.81-2.

3. The Bhāṣya II.667-68 defines pāritosika as that which is paid as reward for service, valour, etc. and vetana as that which is paid as salary or wages. Elsewhere IV.7.21 it says that the army that belongs to the allies is maintained through good-will, one's own army is however maintained by salary.

4. R.Niyogi, History of the Gāhādavāla Dynasty, pp.191f.

could as well refer to remuneration in kind or daily provision. In the Lekhapaddhati the pañcāhala in charge of the granary is ordered to pay to a certain foot-soldier (padāti) a specified quantity of grain and other undressed provisions.¹ The Nītivākyaṃṛta^{1a} recommends state pensions to soldiers. It says that the King incurs a debt if he does not maintain the relations of an officer, who has died in the service of the state. In none of these texts do we find any reference to the soldiers receiving marching allowance.² But in the Rājatarāṅgiṇī³ we often read of the soldiers being paid pravāsa-vatana (marching allowance). Though such payments are not positively attested outside Kashmir, it seems very probable that other Indian kingdoms had similar practices.⁴

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1. p.57. The document is dated Sanyat 1533 but it can be utilised for our period because, as is apparent from other documents also, there was no basic difference in the early and late mediaeval periods.
 2. The Nītiprakāśikā VI.100 states that the soldiers are to receive, besides their usual pay marching allowance (bhaktam in the form of food provisions) per march (pratiprayāna) after having considered the distance and difficulties they had to cover (mārgāyāsam).
 3. VII.1156; VIII.740, 757, 808, 1457, 2753.
 4. In the entire range of Indian literature there is no other parallel reference excepting the Sukranīti V.188, which provides for travelling allowance (pāradeśya) to military officers at the rate of 1/30th more than actual expenditure.

1a. Ch. XXX. Cf. Nītiprakāśikā, VI.106-8.

It appears from their contemporary evidence that cash payment was not the usual mode of remunerating military officers. The references noted above only indicate that the soldiers, whether serving under feudatories or under independent kings, were generally remunerated in some form. As against this the higher officers often received fiefs in lieu of salaries. The usual practice would seem to have been to assign to a feudal chief a fief with the obligation to supply a fixed quota of troop. In the Upamitibhavaprapañcā-kathā¹ there are many references to a city being granted to an officer in return for military service (bhaṭabhukti). It would appear from these references in a philosophical allegory of the type of the Upamitibhavaprapañcākathā that this practice was quite widespread. In the Kṛtyakalpataṛu² the term deśapati is explained as warriors and others (sainikādīḥ) which suggests that at least in the Gūhaḍavāla empire the military officers were often given the right to enjoy a village or another territorial division by way of remuneration. From the Lekha-paddhati it would appear to have been a common practice to

1. pp. 589, 640, 216.
 2. Brahmacārī, p. 251 - Deśapatiḥ sainikādīḥ.

grant villages to military chiefs called rājaputras requiring them to maintain a specified number of horses and soldiers, which obviously they had to supply to their lord whenever the necessity arose. In one of the specimen documents in the Lekhapaddhati¹ the rājaputra who is granted the enjoyment of a certain village is required to present himself at the capital of the overlord with a force of 100 footmen and 20 horses. Two other documents in the same text² indicate that such rājaputras were often required to proceed to the help of the officer in charge of the administrative division called pathaka. In these cases the personal expenses of the rājaputra and the maintenance of the soldiers and the horses were to be met by the officer in charge of the pathaka, who was to enter them duly in the ledger (vahikā). In one of the two documents of this type the number of horses and soldiers provided by the rājaputra is given. The officer of the pathaka in order to remove the possibility of the rājaputra demanding maintenance for more horses and warriors than actually provided by him was required to pay the money only after having seen and verified their numbers personally. One may be tempted to compare these details with the mansabdārī

1. p.7.

2. Ibid., p.13.

system as it developed in later times. In four references the quota of the army to be maintained was fixed, as was the case in the mansabdārī system. But we do not know if as in later times there were many grades of mansabs. In the Lekha-paddhati we have reference only to rājaputras. Incidentally it may also be pointed out that as in the mansabdārī system there was a tendency of the mansabdārs to maintain a smaller force than that required by their mansabs, to remove which was introduced the practice of branding horses. In the Lekha-paddhati also the officer of the pathaka was required to make payment against the number seen by him (dr̥ṣṭa-ghoṭaka-paḍātīnīām).

The epigraphic evidence often refers to military officers receiving grants of land in a number of ways.¹ Though these cannot be taken to refer to the fiefs which these officers received by way of their salaries, they make a strong case for the common prevalence of feudal assignments as the mode of remunerating these officers. It should however be admitted that the evidence of the inscriptions is necessarily limited

1. Cf. Sukranīti II.699f which defines a prasāda-pattra (document of favour) as that by which the king confers lands etc., on persons as a proof of satisfaction with their services, valour etc.

as they record only special cases which had to be recorded in a lasting manner. The soldiers who usually received salaries in cash or kind had no chance of being mentioned in these records. In any case it is clear that the higher military officers were often given feudal assignments, which were also often granted in the case of some remarkable military achievement or service.

The Garra Plates of the Candella king Trailokyavarman dated 1204 A.D.¹ show that the heirs or dependents of warriors killed in battle were granted a pension in the form of land assignments. This inscription records the grant of a village to the heirs of a certain rāuta named Sāmanta who had lost his life in a battle with the Turuṣkas. Significantly enough we have here a specific term mṛtyukavṛtti for such a maintenance which suggests that such an assignment was quite common in the period.

There are some Candella inscriptions which record grants for outstanding military service. Thus the Charkhari Plates dated 1254 A.D.² record that king Vīravarman granted a village to a rāuta Ābhi for a special deed of valour which he performed

1. E.I., XVI.272ff ll.7-11.

2. E.I., XX.132-33.

in the battle of Sondhi. Like this record, the Dahi inscription¹ of the same Candella king, dated 1288 A.D., records a grant said to be for the spiritual merit of the donor and his parents, but essentially non-religious in character; this is made in recognition of the great achievements of the distinguished military official Balabhadra Mallaya. Many members of the same Vāstavya Kāyastha family are found receiving village grants from the Candella kings for their meritorious services. Thus King Kīrtivarman granted to Mahesvara the village of Piplāhikā and the authority over the gates of Kāliñjara as a reward for the help the latter gave to the king when he fell in distress in some battle fought at Pītādri.² According to the Ajaygadh rock inscription of Bhojavarman, king Trailokyavarman appointed Vāseka, another member of this Kāyastha family, as visīṣa of the fort of Jayapura and granted him a village, obviously for his military services in defeating a rebel named Bhojaka, conquering part of his territory, pacifying the Candella kingdom and thus making it secure against foreign enemies.³

King Paramardī of the Candella dynasty is found granting

1. Cunningham, A.S.R., XXI pp. 74-76.

2. E.I., XXX no. 17, v. 18.

3. Ibid., no. 38 (II), vv. 6-20.

one-fourth (pada) of the donated land to his brāhmaṇa senāpati named Ajayapāla in 1167 A.D.¹ and distributing the remaining three-fourths among the three sons of the same senāpati.² Later on in ~~the~~ 1171 A.D. Paramardī recorded in the Iochawar³ Plates the grant of a village made by him in favour of another brāhmaṇa senāpati named Madanapālasārman. In both these cases the grants were made for spiritual benefit. But the very fact that these military chiefs did receive in whatever capacity the village assignment is not without significance. It is to be noted that out of the three sons of senāpati Ajayapāla only one was a rāuta while the other two were just private individuals. King Trailokyavarman is found making another land-grant⁴ to the family of the rāuta named Sāmanta in 1205 A.D. The absence of any reference to the caste of the donee creates a legitimate suspicion that he was not a brāhmaṇa and that the grant was a non-religious one made probably for military purposes. Another grant of the same nature seems to have been made by Trailokyavarman in 1208.⁵ The donee Kulśarmā was

1. Ibid., no. 17, vv.19-20.

2. Ibid., IV no.20.

3. I.A., XXV, pp.205ff.

4. E.I., XVI no. 20 (II).

5. E.I., XXXI no. 11.

a brāhmaṇa, but the absence of any reference to the spiritual merit for which the grant was made or the pious occasion of it would suggest that it was not a religious grant. The donee was a military officer (nāyaka) and belonged to a family of military chiefs and the grant would appear to have been made for military considerations. We find that after defeating the Cāhamāna king Arṇorāja of Nadol the Caulukya king Kumārapāla placed Nadol under his daṇḍādhipā Vaijalladeva Cāhamāna. It is not unlikely that through this new possession Vaijalladeva received the status of a feudal chief. In an inscription dated in the Vikrama year 1231 Vaijalladeva is mentioned as a maḥamaṇḍaleśvara.¹

We learn from the records of the Gāhaḍavāla king Jayas-
candra that a kṣatriya rāuta named Rājyadharavarman had received as many as six land-grants.² As has been rightly pointed out by Prof. R.S.Sharma³ in very many cases the grantees in the Candella and Gāhaḍavāla records are rāutas. Rāuta is ^tymologically derived from rājaputra which originally meant a prince or scion of a royal family. In these records, however, the

1. D.Sharma, Early Chauhān Dynasties, p.134, f.n.35.

2. I.A., XVIII pp. 134-43.

3. J.E.S.H.O., IV p.102.

rāutas are unconnected with royal families and belong alike to kṣatriya, brāhmaṇa and kāyastha communities.¹ Those inscriptions which record an assignment to a military officer or to a person already having the status of a rāuta cannot be taken to refer to the usual assignments which accompanied their posts. In that case there would not have been much justification for making a special record of them along after they were awarded the military office. But in any case such grants indicate that the military officers were often awarded feudal assignments, and that feudal chiefs had to render military assistance to their overlord.

In the records of the eastern Gāṅgas nāyakas appear to have occupied a position similar to that of the rājaputras of other regions. There are a few records which speak of land-grants being made to these military chiefs. These land-grants would not fall under the category of religious grants and appear to have been made as remuneration of their military duties or as assignments with military obligations. Thus Vajrahasta III is found granting a village to a certain Gaṇapati

1. As we have seen elsewhere (*infra* pp. 225f) a rājaputra or rāuta was a feudal chief who had to maintain a fixed quota of troops with which he rendered military service to his overlord.

Nāyaka¹ who would appear, from the absence of any reference to his gotra and pravara, to have been a non-brāhmaṇa. Another inscription recording a grant of three villages made by Madhu-kāmārṇava, son of Anantavarman, in favour of a certain Krapa Nāyaka² is clear on the point and describes the villages granted as forming a vaiśyāgrahāra because the recipients are said to have belonged to the vaiśya caste. In the case of the grant of a tax-free village made by Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga the beneficiary is described simply as subsisting on the feet of the king (pādopajīvin) but the grant would appear to have been the remuneration for some kind of military service because the grandfather of the grantee has nāyaka attached to his name.³

The clearest indication of military officers receiving assignments of revenues as their remuneration comes from the Caulukya empire. In a copper plate dated 1162 A.D. Alhapa, a feudatory of the Caulukya Kumārāpāla is found granting the tax balādhipābhāvya of two villages to two temples.⁴ As in the grant this cess is mentioned as a levy upon the villagers, they probably paid a fixed amount of cash or grain per house-

1. Madras Report on Epigraphy, 1918-9, Appendix A no.3.

2. Ibid., no.5.

3. I.A., XVIII pp.171-72 ll.109-113.

4. D.Sharma, Early Chauhān Dynasties, p.187, II ll.9-14.

hold to remunerate the military officer called balādhīpa. The very fact that the king could transfer the revenue assignment meant for the balādhīpa to the donee would suggest that the claim of this military officer was not of a lasting and deep-rooted type. It is possible that the state used to raise money from the villagers to meet the remuneration of the officer. This would appear to receive support from the fact recorded in the inscription that though the village Nandānā had been granted to the god Brupuruṣadeva, the earlier greedy rulers appropriated the balādhīpābhāvyā every year.

The six-fold classification of the army according to the source from which the constituents are drawn - maula (hereditary troops), bhrta (hired troops), śrenī (soldiers belonging to the corporations), mitra (troops of allies), amitra (troops of enemies) and āṭavika (troops of forest tribes) - appearing in earlier texts¹, is mentioned in the works of our period also². Thus these texts contemplate a heterogeneous character of the army of their period. These divisions had more than a purely theoretical existence, for they are alluded to even in the inscriptions of the period.³

1. Artha, IX.2.

2. Mānasollāsa, I p.79 v.556; Medhātithi on Manu VII.185; Agni Purāṇa, CCXLII.1-2 - the printed text has bhūta and śronī in place of bhrta and śrenī which have been translated as the front or the vanguards and the rear.

3. E.g., Udepur Prāśasti of the kings of Malva, E.I., I pp. 233-36 v.19.

Of these different classes maulas were regarded as the best and most reliable, forming the main strength of the king.¹ The Mānasollāsa explains maula as vamsākramānugata² and is followed by the Rājanītiratnākara^{2a} which paraphrases the term as xxx pitṛ-pitāmahādi-kramānugata. But it is not clear in what sense the army was regarded as hereditary.³ One possibility is that the son of the soldier succeeded his father to the post. But then the question would be whether the eldest or the ablest or all the sons of the deceased soldier were recruited in the army.⁴ The Ādipurāṇa⁵ of Jināsena advises that when a soldier is killed in battle the king should appoint his son or brother in his place. Kane suggests that the maula army consisted of persons, who and whose ancestors got tax-free lands in return for military service.⁶

1. Ibid. Cf. Tilakamañjarī, p.56. Rājanītiratnākara, p.35 - Maulabalaṃ mitrabalaśca viśvasaniyamato viśisyate.

2. I p.79 v.557. The Sukraniti, IV.7.22 distinguishes maula from sādyasaka and defines the former as that which has been existing for many years whereas the latter is not so. It speaks of other classifications based on other considerations (ibid., 26-27) such as the army which receives arms etc. from the master (dattāstra) and that which supplies its own arms and missiles, the one regimented by the state and the regiments formed among the soldiers by themselves; one receiving conveyances from the state and that which does not.

2a. p. 35

3. B.P.Masumdar, Socio-Economic History, p.42.

4. If then last possibility is accepted it would appear that there was no limit to the number of soldiers in the maula army.

5. XLII.

6. History of Dharmaśāstra, III p. 200.

P.W.Thomas however took it to be the army of men connected by caste or race with the king himself.¹ We find a real change taking place in the nature of the maula army if we compare the accounts in the Arthasāstra and the Mānasollāsa. It appears from the Arthasāstra² that the maula army depended on the king for maintenance, was being constantly drilled and received constant favour from the king. The Mānasollāsa³ would suggest that the king had no direct control over the maula army. It advises the king to cultivate the friendship of the chiefs of the maula army by presenting them with precious stones, ornaments and garments and by pleasing utterances and to provide for their maintenance by bestowing upon them one, two or more villages or by payment in gold. We would suggest that maula army denoted the feudal levies which the feudatory chiefs owed to their overlord and which received its remuneration in the form of assignments made by the king and it included levies of clansmen also. The high importance attached to the maula troops is good evidence of the feudal composition of the army. A high reliance was

1. C.H.I., I p.489.

2. IX.2.

3. I p. 80 vv.566-67.

was placed on the maula army. The Nītivākyāmrta¹ says that the maula army is faithful even in adversities, does not rebel even when punished and cannot be won over by enemies.

The hired soldiers (bhṛtas) were second in order of preference. They were in the direct service of the king and received salaries from him. Sometimes the mercenary soldiers were recruited to meet a special situation. In the Rājataranginī² we have many references to cases where even cultivators, artisans and carters were recruited for the royal army. The Mānasollāsa³ advises the king to pay regularly and without delay the salaries (vetana) to the hired soldiers. The salaries are required to be in accordance with their work and are to be paid daily, monthly, three-monthly, four-monthly, half-yearly or yearly. The king should have them inspected daily. The tendency to reduce the importance of mercenary soldiers is reflected in the Rājanītiratnākara⁴, which states that they fight only for their wages and hence in cases of danger to their life there is a likelihood of their desertion.

1. XXII.15.

2. VIII.727, 2418.

3. I p.80 vv.568-70.

4. p.35.

Generally śrenī or guild levies are next only to maula and bhṛta types in importance. This term may refer either to the corporation of soldiers or the soldiers maintained by the economic guilds¹. In the Arthasāstra² there is a reference to the śrenīs of the Kāmbojas, the Surāṣṭras and the Kṣatriyas resorting to trade and industry as well as to the practice of arms as a means of livelihood. It is not unlikely that śrenī troops refer to the members of corporations who functioned as economic guilds and when there was any need, served as soldiers as well. That there were corporations of soldiers is definitely known from the Iṛa copper plate of the Kāmboja king Nayapāla³ which shows that the senāpatīs had to carry on their business with the help of a number of chiefs of the corporations of soldiers (sainika-saṃgha-mukhyas). The Arthasāstra⁴ recognises the importance of the śrenī troops in as much as they belong to the same country as the king and have the same expectations of loss and gain. It appears that

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1. The Sukranīti, IV.7.17ff does not mention the śrenī troops which suggests that to the author of the text the very idea of such a troop appeared irrational.
 2. XI.1.
 3. E.I., XXII pp. 150ff.
 4. IX.2.

in our period the guild levies had lost some of their earlier importance as a constituent of the army. The Mānasollāsa¹ names maula, bhṛtya (= bhṛta) and maitra as the only three good armies and condemns śrenī troops as unreliable. Candēśvara² points out that the troops of the śrenī receive payment for their services but flee from the battle field whenever they find their life in danger. But we would suggest that the decrease in the importance of the troops of the śrenī as a constituent in the composition of the army was due to the fact that in North India in the early mediaeval period there was a gradual decline in the economic prosperity of the guilds and a general weakening in their organisation, with the result that they could not often maintain efficient and large troops.

The mitra troops refer to the contingents sent by a friendly neighbour king with a view to opposing a common enemy. The remaining two types of armies amitra and āṭavika are never viewed with favour.³ The Mānasollāsa⁴ takes amitra

1. I p.79 vv.557-60.

2. p.35 - Śrenībalaṃ sāhityārthamāgatam...Śrenībalantu bhṛtakavat yathā bhṛtakasya bharaṇameva nimittam prāṇasaṃśaye pa-sarāṇasambhāvanā tathā śrenībalasya sāhityanimittādapa-sarāṇasambhāvanā.

3. Cf. Artha, IX.2.

4. I p. 79 vv.559-60.

troops as consisting of soldiers, who once belonged to an enemy king but were taken captive and made slaves. The Rājā-nītiratnākara¹ explains this type as troops that come to a king after leaving the king's enemy and adds that a king accepts such troops only with a view to securing the enfeeblement of the power of the enemy and as such no confidence should be placed in them. The troops composed of forest-dwellers and wild tribesmen are called āṭavika and are regarded as forming the worst type. It would appear that this last type was not merely theoretical for wild tribesmen are actually attested as assisting some kings even in our period. Thus there is a tradition that when the Gaṇḍukya king Kumārapāla marched against the Cāhamāna king he was accompanied by forest tribes and mountaineers dressed in the skins of deer.² From the Kirātārjunīya³ it appears that the high notions of chivalric ideals of our period viewed with disfavour the recruitment of the mountaineers and wild tribes in the royal army.

It was an obligation of the feudal lord to offer military

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1. p. 35 - Aribalan sātṛum viḥāyāgetam....Aribalasya grahaṇam-arinyūnikarāṇāya na tu tatra viśvāsaḥ.
 2. A.K. Forbes, Rāmāyaṇa, I p. 185.
 3. Rūpaka-ṣaṭkaṁ, p. 15.

service to his overlord.¹ In some of the feudal societies elsewhere we find that this obligation was fixed in the form of service for a certain number of days.² Our evidences do not indicate any such crystallisation of custom in this respect. It would appear that the overlord summoned the armies of his feudatories whenever he fought a war, offensive or defensive. In actual practice the amount of help given depended on the mutual relations between the overlord and his ^{feudatories} ~~vassals~~ and the degree of the effective control which the former wielded over the latter. A Pāla record speaks of the capital of the sovereign king as filled with the countless cavalry brought by many kings who most likely were his feudatories.³ The Garuḍa Pillar Inscription of Bhaṭṭa Guravarmīśra from Badal mentions the army sent to king Devapāla by his subordinate rulers from all the quarters.⁴ In the Agni Purāṇa⁵

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1. It appears that for the protection of their kingdom the Gāhaḍavālas had established a ring of feudatory states along their strategic points on the western frontier. See R. Niyogi, History of the Gāhaḍavāla Dynasty, p. 100.
 2. Hallam, The Middle Ages, I p. 171.
 3. Udicānānaka-narapati-prābhrtikrtāprameya-hayavāhinī q. by B. C. Sen, Historical Aspects of Bengal Inscriptions, p. 542.
 4. Dikakrāyṭa-bhūbhrtparikaravisaradvāhinī-durvvilokastasthan śrī-Devapāla-narpati - E. I., II p. 160f v. 6.
 5. CCXLI. 20-24.

helping the paramount sovereign is included in the list of the duties of feudatory chiefs. In the literary works of our period we have many references to feudatories marching with their overlord or of feudatories fighting for their overlords. In the Tilakamañjarī Samaraketu when he goes out to punish some turbulent kings who were not paying tribute regularly is said to have been accompanied by the sāmantas and other chiefs.¹ and in later account also the sāmantas figure as camping on the battle-field² and taking part in raids.³ In the Brhatkathā-kosa⁴ of Hariṣeṇa when the war clarion is sounded the feudatory rulers, ministers and warriors assemble at the place gate to take part in the fight. In another story of the same text⁵ a clear distinction is made between the army at the direct disposal of the king himself and the total force which he could summon. When the army, evidently composed of feudal levies, is defeated the king himself marches along with his personal army. The description of war given by Śālibhadra Sūri in his Bāhubalirāsa (1148 A.D.)⁶ refers to the participation of feudal chiefs, sāmantas, maṇḍalapatis and rāutas. Medhātithi⁷ also

1. p. 114.

2. p. 123.

3. pp. 136f.

4. LVI.294-96.

5. LXII.33-35.

6. Rāhula Śāṅkṛtyāyana, Hindī Kāvya Dhārā, pp.400, 404, 406.

7. On Manu, VII.97.

implies that the sāmantas formed the main element in the composition of an army. The Prabandhacintāmaṇi¹ contains many references to sāmantas participating in the war for their overlord. In the Rājataranginī also we often read of dāmaras and sāmantas as important constituents of the army.² The history of northern India in our period is replete with occasions when the ^{feudatories} ~~vassals~~ participated in the campaigns of their overlord or else joined him in opposing the attacks made by an enemy.³

The feudal levies no doubt often made the number of the soldiers in the army look staggering but ultimately they affected the army adversely. The number of the soldiers forming its core and depending directly on the emperor was gradually decreasing with the result that it came to be composed mostly of feudal levies. The Sāṃkhya-tattva-kaumudī of Vācaspati Miśra⁴ makes it quite clear that the state army was composed of forces levied by village-heads or chiefs. It illustrates the functioning of the senses under the functional

1. pp. 17, 86, 79-81.

2. VII.48, 360; VIII.1072; V.145-47.

3. B.P.Mazumdar, Socio-Economic History, p.27 f.n.154.

4. p.54 ll.16-18 - Tathendriyavyāpārā api buddhireva avavyāpārenādhyavasāyinaḥ sahaikavyāpāribhavanti yathā eva-sainyena saha grāmādhyakṣādisainyam sarvādhyakṣasya bhavati.

determination of mind by the analogy of the village chief or headman who along with his forces functions under the sarvādhyakṣa, who appears to have been a state officer. In the Triṣaṣṭīśālākāpuruṣacarita¹ also in case of a war the soldiers are spoken of as coming from every village and city. According to the Prabandhaśintāmaṇi² when the Caulukya king Siddharāja was surrounded by the Bhilla forces, his minister named Sāntu raised a huge army by collecting a horse from every village and city and liberated his master. Likewise according to the same text³ king Mūlarāja before invading the country of Sapādalakṣa summons all the sāmantas and rājaputras. The Kāmil-ut-Tawārikh of Ibn Asir⁴ records that there were many nobles in the army of the king of Banaras. We learn from the Tārikh-i-Firishta⁵ that in the second battle of Tarain Prthvirāja Cāhamāna was helped by 150 tributaries. On one occasion it is said that the Caulukya king Bhīma sent orders to his feudatories and friends and a vast army assembled from

1. I pp.285f.

2. p.75 ll.6-7.

3. p.17 ll.2-8.

4. Elliot and Dawson, II.251.

5. (Briggs) Vol.I p.175.

all sides.¹

The extent to which feudal levies dominated the composition of the army in our period can be realised from the accounts of the Arab merchant Sulaimān who writes that the kings of India have a great number of soldiers, who are not paid by the king, but when they are mustered for war, they take the field entirely at their own expense without receiving anything from the king.² It is to be remembered that Sulaimān himself refers to the armies maintained by the Rāṣṭrakūṭas,³ and the Pālas⁴ and the Gurjara-Pratihāras⁵ and in the case of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas he very clearly speaks of regular pay being given to the troops. It would therefore appear that the earlier statement of Sulaimān refers to the feudal levies, which obviously must have formed a predominant part of the Indian armies described by the foreigner.

The absence of their own standing armies rendered the kings dependent on the military help of their ^{feudatories} vassals and if this was not forthcoming they found themselves in a very miser-

1. A.K. Forbes, *Rāsa/Mālā*, I p.161.

2. Elliot and Dowson, I p.7.

3. Ibid., p.3.

4. Ibid., p.5.

5. Ibid., p.4.

able condition. In the history of Kashmir we find occasions when the kings had to go out of their way to collect foot-soldiers.¹ The Agni Purāṇa² says that a king surrounded by rebellious or discontented vassals can never extort from them services including help in time of war. Medhātithi³ also discusses the policy to be pursued by a king who when alone and helpless finds all his feudatory chiefs risen against him and is incapable of making a stand against them. It is interesting to note that though no supporter of imperialist tradition in northern India has handed down any advice to lessen the dependence of an overlord on the military force of his vassals,⁴ Baddena and Pratāparudra of the kingdom of Kākṣīyas² of Warangal have given some thought to it. Baddena advises a king to maintain himself a strong military force as his private guard rather than allowing anyone of his sāmantas. Likewise Pratāparudra urges a king to assign only small villages

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1. Rāj., VIII.726-8; VII.367-8. The Sukranīti, IV.2.19-20 says that when the king is preparing to maintain an army to destroy the enemy he should receive from the people special grants of fines, duties, etc.
 2. CCXLI.20-21. The Sukranīti, IV.7.48 advises that in order to conquer enemies peace should be made even with one's own feudatories.
 3. On Manu, VII.106.
 4. The Sukranīti, I.249f describes those kings who do not increase their army as almost like oxen i.e., fools.

to the sāmantas, reserving the big ones for the maintenance of his personal army and the replenishment of treasury.¹

A well-known illustration of the helplessness of the imperial army to cope with any major trouble in case the help of the feudatories was not available comes from Bengal. Though the Pālas themselves mention in their records royal army consisting of people of various regions, race and tribes it appears that it was not a large one and so could not suffice to suppress the Kaivarta revolt. On such occasions the feudatories used to dictate their own terms before providing assistance to the overlord. We learn from the Rāmacarita² that Rāmapāla had to make a liberal distribution of his land and wealth to secure the assistance of his feudatories in raising a powerful army for a campaign against the Kaivartas. It had become quite normal in those times for an overlord to appease his feudatories before actually going out on a war. The Mānasollāsa³ urges a king on the day preceding the date of starting out on an expedition to satisfy the princes, the mandalādhīśas, the respected sāmantas, and soldiers with

1. Yasdani, Early History of the Deccan, pp.666-68.

2. XLIII.44-45.

3. I p.132 vv.1146-7.

presents of gold, garments and ornaments. The Agni Purāṇa¹ extends the general advise for a king to bring under his sway the leader of his own army, the warriors, the rural population (janapadādīkās) as well as his sāmantas and forest-people, who are not well disposed towards him by means of gifts of money and by creating differences among them. We learn from the Prabandhacintāmaṇi² that king Mūlarāja before going out to conquer the country of Sapādalakṣa summoned his sāmantas, rājaputras and foot-soldiers and honoured them duly by making presents to them.

The feudal composition of the army naturally implied a certain basic weakness in its organisation. The bond of unity in the heterogeneous medley of feudal levies was the loyalty of the ^{feudatories} vassals for their overlord which was in most cases doubtful. As rightly pointed out by Marion Gibbs with reference to the feudal order in England, loyalty to a lord was the supreme virtue, betrayal the supreme shame, but betrayal was inevitable.³ Medhātithi⁴ extols the ideal of personal loyalty for a warrior and says that one who deserts his

1. CCXLI.62.

2. p.17 ll.2-8.

3. Feudal Order, p.24.

4. On Manu, VII.89.

master in a battle goes to hell while one fighting for his lord attains heaven by his meritorious deeds. The same ideal is lauded in the Śiśupālavadha¹ which says that a warrior should not give up his life in a battle unless he has paid off his obligations by his loyalty. Treachery towards the overlord is branded as a sin in the Rukmīṇīharana of Vatsarāja.² But in actual practice the ideal of loyalty to the overlord was often sacrificed. From the Tilakamañjarī³ we learn that the turbulent feudatory chiefs were often unwilling to fight for their overlord but were compelled by the orders of the overlord to join him. It is clear that their loyalty was doubtful from the very start. Disloyalty on the battle-field on the part of the ^{feudatories} vassals had become such a common phenomenon of our period that Jayānaka in his Prthvīrāja-vijaya⁴ regards it as the natural effect of the Kali Age. It was often easy for an invading king to win over to his side the feudatory chiefs of his adversary. The Agni Purāṇa⁵ urges an invading king to weaken his adversary by bringing about a quarrel among

1. XIX.57.

2. Rūpaka-gaṭkam, p.42 - svāmīdroha-vyatikara.

3. p.67 - Ajñākṛtānāṃ duṣṭasāmantānāmanikairāpūryamāpakataka-vinivesaḥ.

4. X.32.

5. CGXVI.12.

his sons and feudatories. Śaikhadhara in his Laṭakamelaka¹ ridiculed the lukewarm loyalty of a rājaputra on the battlefield. It is important to note that this theme is exceptional in the entire range of earlier Sanskrit literature but would appear to have been so common in the early mediaeval period as to have formed the subject of a farce. It was not unusual for a feudatory chief to transfer his allegiance in a battle from one side to the other. From the Dvyāśrayakāvya² we learn that Vijaya and Kṛṣṇa, the two sāmantas who were sent to oppose Vallāla, the usurper of the throne of Malwa, went over to the side of the latter. According to the Prabandhasintāmaṇi³ once Cāhaḍa invaded the kingdom of the Caulukya king Kumārapāla in the company of the Cāhamāna king. As Cāhaḍa had already bribed the sāmantas of Kumārapāla they exhibited their rebellious attitude by disobeying the orders of the chiefs of the Caulukya army. Likewise the defection of the Paramāra chief of Candrāvati put Kumārapāla to much trouble in his campaign against the Cāhamāna king Arjorāja. A feudatory ruler of Godraha is

1. Act II.

2. XIX.98.

3. p.79.

4. I.A., 1925 (Supplement), p.23.

said to have betrayed Tejapāla the minister of Kumārapāla at a critical juncture in his operations against the king of Bharoch.¹ Cases of military leaders deserting their king and fighting for the enemy are found in literary works like the Hammīra Mahākāvya.² In the history of Kashmir we meet many such instances of treachery, disloyalty and desertion ~~and~~ on the part of the feudatories and military chiefs.³

In an army composed mostly of feudal levies the individual soldier, though feeling loyalty for his immediate master, had not much attachment to the sovereign king. It would appear that, though the chivalric ideal was regarded as the highest virtue, in actual practice a soldier had no hesitation in running from the battle-field. A verse in the Prākṛta Vyākaraṇa⁴ of Hemacandra expresses the fears of a wife that if her husband had not met his death he would have run away from the battle-field and thus would have brought her utter shame and infamy.

Though the armies of our period are often reputed to have been numerous they had a large number of camp followers who

1. Ibid.

2. XII.

3. Rāj., VIII.923, 927, 2816ff, 2822ff.

4. VIII.4.351-Bhalla huā jo māriyā bahini mahārā kamtu.

Lajjejamtu vayamsiyahu jai bhaggā ghara emtu.

did not participate in the actual fight. When the battle reached its highest pitch these camp followers used to run away for their lives.¹

The feudal armies, coming from different areas, could not be welded into a unity. It was difficult for them to work as a unit and to follow a systematic and well thought-out plan in cohesion.² Unfortunately this defect was not well realised. On the contrary it was considered a reason of pride for a king if his troops were gathered from many feudatories. Thus in the Kanaswa inscription of Śivagaṇa dated 738-39 A.D. the rulers of the Maurya family take pride in describing themselves as served by armies from afar.³ The numerical strength of the armies was often an obstacle in mobilising the army effectively. If the constituent elements had had some previous experience of or training in working together, numbers would have been a source of strength; otherwise they rendered the army unwieldy. It is interesting to note that Nayaçandra Sūri in his Rambhāmañjarī Nāṭikā⁴ calls Jayaccandra the Gāhadavāla king

1. Rāj., VIII.2846.

2. The Sukranīti, IV.7.25 classifies armies into two, gulmī-bhūta has officers of the state and the agulmaka brings its own chiefs.

3. I.A., XIX p.58 - dūrābhyāgata-vāhinī-parikara.

4. p.6.

dala-paṅgulā¹ probably because his armies consisting of feudal levies were too vast to mobilise.²

In such a heterogeneous army there could not be a unity of command. The emphasis on personal valour often stood in the way of the commander of the army. We can very well imagine the situation when the different feudal chiefs regarded themselves as in no way inferior to the commander or else clamoured to have the post of the commander for themselves. We learn from the Tripuradāha of Vatsarāja that other chiefs coveted the honour of the commander and hence were jealous of his position.³

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1. Paṅgula means lame or crippled. Dala means among other things a clump, lump, heap, quantity or a detachment or body of troops. See Monier-Williams, Sanskrit-English Dictionary and Apte's Sanskrit-English Dictionary Ed. P.K.Gode and C.G.Karve.
 2. According to the Kāmil-ut-Tawārikh Jayaccandra had 700 elephants and his men were said to amount to a million and there were many nobles in his army - Elliot and Dowson, II p. 251. Another contemporary account in the Tāj-ul-Ma'āsir informs that Jayaccandra prided himself on the number of his forces and elephants and had an army countless as the particles of sand - Ibid., pp.223ff. In the Prthvirājarāso ascribed to Cand Bardāi the army of Jayaccandra is said to have been so vast that during the march the van had reached their ground before the rear had moved off. See R.Niyogi, History of the Gāhaḍavāla Dynasty, p.109.
 3. Rūpeka-ṣaṭkam, pp.86, 89.

A major factor which prevented the feudal armies from working as a unity was the clannish rivalry and dissensions resulting from pride in family or clan. Kṣemendra in his Darpadalana¹ vehemently criticises and exposes the vanity of clan and family among the kṣatriya chiefs of his time, which suggests that this vice had reached an annoying height in this period. The kṣatriya warriors, wherever they went, carried with them a sense of pride in their family or clan and always emphasised their separate and distinct individuality². It was only natural that this unbridled pride led to mutual jealousy and internecine war. A passage in the Hamnīra-mada-mardana³ suggests that the baneful effect of this "all pervasive and ruinous discord among the kṣatriyas" was realised in the sense that the kingly families of India weakened as a result of it are said to have fallen before the Muslim invaders like dry leaves in autumn. Somadeva Sūri in his Nītivākyaṃṛta⁴ refers to the proverbial bellicosity of the kṣatriyas and to their fighting with one another due to their innate pride and

1. pp. 66f.

2. Cf. Udayasunderikathā, p. 145 - Vividhavaṃśaprasūtaḥ kṣatriyakumārāḥ.

3. p. 14.

4. X. 107.

jealousy. Even on the battle-field this prevented the feudal levies from working for their common lord in a united way. The Agni Purāṇa¹ advises that having drawn up the soldiers in a battle array the commander should excite them by their names, and reminding them of the glory of the heroic traditions of their clans or families, they respectively belonged to. In the Prabandhacintāmaṇi² when the Caulukya king proposes to invade the Sapādalakṣa country he summons his sāmantas, rājaputras and foot-soldiers and duly honours them with presents after having considered their family or clan and their deeds (anvayāvadātābhyām-upalakṣya).³

Sometimes the members of the king's own clan created difficulties for him and prevented him from organising an effective army out of the feudal levies. Medhātithi⁴ points out that some members of the family of the king who are desirous of obtaining the kingdom are angry and inimical, and alienate themselves from him. The phenomenon of clannish

1. (Ed. R.L.Mitra) CCXXXV.51 - yodhānuttejayatsarvvānnāma-gotrāvadānataḥ.

2. p. 17 II.2-8.

3. Avadāta is generally used as an adjective meaning clean, clear, white, yellow or beautiful. Sometimes as a noun it denotes white colour. Here it seems to stand for glorious deeds.

4. On Mann, VII.197.

dissension must have been quite wide-spread to have deserved the remark from Bilhana¹ that members of the kingly families do not realise that the position of the king has been ordained by fate to be enjoyed by only one of them but greedy of having it for themselves they destroy the family itself. The history of the period yields a long list of treacherous acts illustrating clannish dissension. We may refer to one of these noticed in the Purātana-prabandha-saṃgraha.² It informs us that Pratāpa Siṃha, a relation of Prthvirāja, was conspiring with the Muslims against him.

1. Vikramāṅkadevacarita, p.50 v.37.
 2. Prthvirāja-prabandha.

CHAPTER IV - FORTS AND FORTIFICATION.

The tradition of fortification in India goes back to a very early date. The remains of the so-called Indus Valley Civilisation as revealed at Harappa and Mohenjodaro suggest that the strong and well-planned fortification walls were one of its characteristic features.¹ A study of the Vedic literature also reveals that the adversaries of the Aryans whom they met on coming to India were living in citadels.² The recent excavations at Kausambi indicate that the Aryans probably learnt the use of fortification from the Indus Valley people, the fortification walls of Kausambi, going back to the foundation of the city itself in the 10th century B.C., resemble the Harappan ones so much that they can easily pass off as copies.³ A continuity of the tradition of fortification archaeologically is proved by the remains at several ancient sites.⁴

Forts have no doubt always been assigned a significant position in the political system being viewed as one of the

1. Ancient India, No.3, pp.61ff.

2. See Vedic Index, s.v., para.

3. Indian Archaeology, 1958-59, p.46.

4. E.g., Ahicchatra - Ancient India, No.1, p.38; Sisupalgarh - Ibid., No.5, p.67; Rajgir - Ibid., No.7, p.66.

seven constituents of the state. In the early mediaeval period forts came to occupy a very important position in the life of northern India. The accounts of Arab and Turk invasions would imply that the whole of the northern India was studded with innumerable forts.¹ Forts had become such an integral part of the political life of the period that the political thinkers generally talk in terms of their use.² Their importance receives fitting testimony in the growing mass of passages dealing with forts in the works on polity.³ That this indicated not a mere academic interest but a real necessity will follow from the fact that the Mānasollāsa⁴ is not content simply to enumerate the various types of forts but gives practical hints on how to capture the different types. Likewise the Yuktikalpataru⁵ and the Nītivākyaṃṛta⁶ do not

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1. Cf. Kavīndravacanasaṃuccaya, v.83.
 2. Cf. Ĥemacandra, Laghvarhaṇṇīti, II.1.6-14; Medhātithi on Manu, VII.167 - explanation of dvaiddhībha.
 3. Mānasollāsa, I p.78 vv.541-42; Yuktikalpataru, p.17 vv. 118-19; Nītivākyaṃṛta, pp.79-80; Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra, I p.31 vv.36-9; Agni Purāṇa, CCXXXIX and CCXLI; Kṛtyakalpataru, Rājadharmā, pp.46-7.
 4. I pp.124-25.
 5. p.117 v.119.
 6. pp.79-80.

follow the traditional classifications of forts but instead divide them into artificial and natural, indicating a more practical approach to the problem necessitated by its importance.

To match this importance of the forts we find glowing praise of forts in the political texts. A king without a fort is like a snake without poison or an elephant without rut who can be easily subordinated by others;¹ he has no refuge, just like a bird let loose from a ship in the midst of the ocean.² Bhoja³ observes that the ordinary military strength of a king is no strength; his real strength lies in his forts because a king with a meagre force becomes powerful on account of their invincibility. The Sārṅgadharapaddhati⁴ remarks that the purpose, served by a fort cannot be had even from a thousand elephants and a lac of horses. The excellence of the fort lies in this that an archer seated on its fencing wall fights with a hundred and a hundred with ten thousand.⁵ The Nītivākyaṃṛta⁶ aptly says "That is called a fortress which

1. Sārṅgadharapaddhati, no.1364.

2. Nītivākyaṃṛta, p.80.

3. Yuktikalpataru, p.17.

4. No. 1363.

5. Yuktikalpataru, p.7 no.118; cf. Sārṅgadharapaddhati, no.1365.

6. p.199.

removes calamities and inflicts them upon the enemy".

The need for the safe protection afforded by the strong walls of the forts has to be realised in the background of the internecine wars of the period.¹ The growing tendency to the rise of petty powers with local control also must have supported it. The forts must have provided the necessary protection to a local chief or landlord against his powerful neighbouring state. This role of the forts is illustrated by a story in the Bṛhatkathākośa² where a king is sad because he cannot do anything against a chief who plundered his city. for he is invincible in his forest fort. Forts were regarded as the only natural place for the residence of a king.³

The growth of feudal conditions with their accompanying insecurity of life and property must have given a fillip to this tendency. The growing localisation and self-sufficiency in economic life which is often found associated with feudal conditions must have dictated the need for having the cities fortified. In line with this we find the Mahāpurāṇa⁴ requiring

1. There was a special necessity for dry and open regions such as Rajasthan.

2. p.20.

3. Agni Purāṇa, CCXXIII- durgadeśe vasannrpaḥ. This expression may also mean "country to which access is difficult owing to natural and other circumstances. Cf. Samarāṅgaṇasūtra-dhāra, I p.62 v.5 - durgeṣu bhūvasāt kāryam....

4. XLII.161-62.

the king to settle his people in a place where there was no danger or aggression. A strange confirmation of this tendency is found in the account preserved by Chau Ju-kua¹ about Nan-ni-hua-lo (=Anhilvada) : "When there are raids by the light horsemen of the Western regions, the only resistance they offer is to lock their gates. In a few days provisions run short and (the raiders) withdraw of their own accord." Both the factors which necessitated the growing emphasis on protection appear to have been recognised in a passage of the Agni Purāṇa² which requires a fort to be situated in a country which should be safe against all foreign invasions; not infested with thieves and robbers and impassable to invading columns. The Rājanītiratnākara³ requires that the royal capital and the houses of the citizens should be built within the surrounding walls of the fortress. The Mahāpurāṇa⁴ also advises the king to settle his people in a place where there is no

1. p. 98.

2. CCXXII.3 - Parairapīditah....Agamyah paracakrāṇām vyāla-taskaravarjītah. The suggestion is obvious but in one respect is rather pedantic; if the country is safe there is no need of a fort.

3. p. 26.

4. XLII.161f.

danger of aggression implying thereby the need for a fortress.

We find references to indicate that old forts were from time to time rebuilt or strengthened and new ones also constructed where required. Thus, for example, Chach is said to have rebuilt the old fort of Manarpūr near Makran.¹ We likewise hear of the fort of Rāwar, of which the foundations were laid by Chach but which was completed by Dharsiya.² We learn from the Sundha inscription that Samarasimha of the Cāhamāna family of Jalor built extensive ramparts Kanakācala or Suvarṇagiri at Jalor equipping them with machines of many kinds, ^tstore-houses and battlements of the Vidyādhari type.³ The Candella kings utilised the geographical factors, the mostly mountainous character of their kingdom, to devote special attention to making it secure with forts. In an inscription from Ajeygadh king Trailokyavarman of this dynasty has been called "the very Creator in providing strong places".⁴ In accordance with this statement it is understandable that a minister of Kīrtivarman should have built a fort at Kīrtigiri.⁵

1. Elliot and Dowson, I.152.

2. Ibid., 154.

3. D.Sharma, Early Chauhan Dynasties, p.146.

4. E.I., I.327.

5. I.A., XVIII.238f.

The recent excavations suggest that the construction of the fort at Bhatinda goes back to early mediaeval times.¹

A list of the forts and fortified cities of the period from extant records will be an impressive one. Thus in Kashmir we find Śīraṣailā², Bānasālā³, Dugdhagata⁴, Prthvigirā⁵, Lohāra-kōṭa, Lauhawar, Lāhur or Loh-kōṭ⁶ and Rājagiri⁷. The Chachnāma mentions several forts and fortified cities in Sind and neighbouring areas, for example, Pābiyā, Hīrūn, Debal, Lohāns, Lakha, Askalanda, Deo, Sikka, Tūbran, Bait, Multan, Sawis, Shākalha, Budapur, Siwistan, Brahmanabad, Rāwar, Sisam, Bātiya, Bahitlur, Brahmpura, Ajtahād, Karūr, Bahrur, Dhalila, Alor (Aror ?), Jewar (Jaipur), and Kanarpūr⁸. Besides these we can locate in Punjab the forts of Bhīra (Bhaṭia), Kāṅgrā (Nagar-kot)⁹, Sarhind¹⁰, and Jandūr¹¹. In the areas under the Cāhamānas

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1. Indian Archaeology, 1954-55, p.26.
 2. Rāj., VIII.2505ff.
 3. Ibid., VIII.1677ff.
 4. Ibid., VII.1179.
 5. Ibid., VII.1152.
 6. Stein (Tr.) II p.298; Elliot and Dowson, II.455f.
 7. Al-Bīrūnī, I.208.
 8. Elliot and Dowson, I pp.138-211.
 9. P.C.Chakravarti, Art of War, p.139.
 10. Elliot and Dowson, II p.296.
 11. Ibid., I p.83.

we find a number of strong forts, including Hānsī, Tabarhindah, Samānā, Nāgor, Maṇḍor, Siwānā, Jālor, Ajmer, Delhi, Nāḍol, Kohrām and Sirsā.¹ To this we must add Chitorgarh and Ranathambhor.² Under the Paramāras we find forts at Ujjain, Dhārā, Rahatgarh, Bhilsa, Mandu and Guṇapura.³ From the Prabandhacintāmaṇi we learn of the forts of Kapilkoṭa⁴ and Bambara.⁵ The Candellas possessed the important forts of Kalanjar, Ajaygadh, Mahoba and Kīrtigiri.⁶ Some other names are Maniyegarh, Gwalior⁷ and Jayapuredurga.⁸ The accounts of Muslim invasions speak of many others in northern India like Āsnī, Thangar, Kol, Meerut, Kanauj, etc.⁹ In Assam we learn of the forts at Gauhati, Dimāpur, Viśvanath, Ratnapura, Sadiya.¹⁰ Colonel Hannay and Captain Dalton have unearthed the remains of old fortresses at many places in Assam.¹¹ The fort of Agni-parvata in Sonitapur (Tezpur) finds reference in the Kumāra-

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1. D. Sharma, Early History of Chauhan Dynasties, p.214.
 2. P.C.Chakravarti, Art of War, p.139.
 3. D.C.Ganguly, History of Paramāra Dynasty, p.246.
 4. p.19 ll.1-3.
 5. p.94 ll.1-10.
 6. N.S.Bose, History of the Candellas, pp.134-35.
 7. P.C.Chakravarti, Art of War, p.139.
 8. E.I., XXVIII p.104 l.20.
 9. P.C.Chakravarti, Art of War, pp.141-42.
 10. Choudhury, History of Assam, p.315.
 11. Barua, Cultural History of Assam, pp.65f.

harana.¹

In the period under study we find a tendency to gradually increase the number of the types of forts. The Arthasāstra² classifies them into four on the basis of their location : parvata (hill fort), audaka (water fort), dhanvaka (desert fort) and XXIX vana (forest fort). The Mahābhārata³ increases the number to six. Manu⁴ also agrees with the Mahābhārata but substitutes audaka (water fort) for the mr̥d (earth fort) variety. The Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra⁵ mentions only four kinds of fortresses : mahīdhara (mountain fort), mūla (forest fort), ambu (water fort), and prākāra (desert fort). The Śārngadhara-Paddhati⁶ says that forts are of many types, but mentions actually only five. The Kālikā Purāṇa⁷ lays much stress on the construction of forts and besides parvata (hill fort), audaka (water fort), dhanvan (desert fort) and vana-durga (forest fort) mentions bhūmi (earth fort) and vr̥kṣa (tree fort).

1. v.194. Cf. Viṣṇu Purāṇa, I.21, V.32-37.

2. II.3.

3. XII.86.5 - Dhanvadurgam mahīdurgam girīdurgam tathaiṣa ca. Manuśyadurgam mr̥ddurgam vanadurgam ca tāni sat.

4. VII.70. Cf. Mānasūtra, X.90f.

5. Vol. I ch.VIII vv.36-39.

6. Nos. 1361-65. Durgam bahuvīdham jñeyam parvatasya jalasya ca. Prākārasya vanasyāpi bhūmerāpi bhavetkvaçit.

7. LXXXIV.112ff.

In the Mānasaollāsa¹ forts have been classified under nine heads : jaladurga (water fort), giridurga (hill fort), pāsāṇa-nirmita durga (fort built of stones), mṛttikāmaya durga (fort built of clay), iṣṭikā-kṛta durga (fort built of bricks), vanadurga (forest fort), marudurga (desert fort), dāru-vinirmita durga (fort built of wood), and naradurga (human fort).

Of all these different types Kauṭilya² regards the hill-fort as superior to all others as it is the most unassailable. The Agni Purāṇa³ followed by the Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra⁴ says that the hill fortress is the best, but adds the reason that because it is invincible and affords the best means of beat-

1. p.78 vv. 541-42. The Śivatattvaratnākara, kalola 5, tarāṅga 6 also enumerates nine kinds of fortresses. The Parasurama-pratāpa enumerates eight kinds of durgas - Rājavallabha-kāṇḍa folio 1 quoted in Kane, History of the Dharmasāstras, III p.179. The Sukraniti, IV.6.2-10 mentions eight kinds of forts : pārikha, pāriṣa, vāṇa, dhava, jala and giri durgas after the physical difficulties or advantage of the site on which the fort stands and sainya and sahāya durgas after the human inmates.

2. Artha, VII.12, p.354.

3. CCXXII.5.

4. I p.240 v.40. According to a late authority Śivatattvaratnākara (Bikshitar, War in Ancient India, p.257) the best are the mountain and water fortifications, while the dārudurga and naradurga belong to the inferior kind.

ing off the invading enemy. The Mānasollāsa¹ endorsing this view, elaborates it and says that the best are the giri and jala types, the worst is the dāru type, the rest being of the medium quality.²

According to the Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra³ of Bhoja a giri-durga (mountain fort) should be surrounded by a chain of lofty hills difficult to scale. Medhātithi⁴ remarks that it should be inaccessibly high, with a single pathway leading to it supplied with water from an underground stream. The mūla-durga (forest fort) of the Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra⁵ is described as full of thorns, shrubs and trees and interspersed with pieces of water on every side and with secret passages leading to and from it. The vārkaṣa durga (arboreal fort) of Medhātithi,⁶ probably the same as the forest fort, is required

1. I p.78 v.549.

2. The Sukraniti, IV.6.13-16 emphasises the importance of human element and regards the sahāya and sainya/durgas as the best one rightly enough because mere physical advantages are of no avail, and it is the valour and character of the troops that matter. Out of the others it gives the order of preference thus, desert fort, pārikha, pāriṣa, forest, dhanva, water and hill (Ibid., 11-12) which suggests a region full of deserts as its locale.

3. I p.31 v.37.

4. VII.70.

5. I p.31 v.38.

6. VII.70.

to be surrounded to a distance of four miles with densely packed large trees. According to the Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra¹ the jaladurga (water-fort) should be surrounded by deep waters on all sides and presents a beautiful appearance. A ghanadurga or bowfort is said to be surrounded by a strongly built wall, built of bricks, double-storeyed, more than 12 cubits high with its base like a palm and its top like a monkey's head.² The mahidurga (earthen fort) is explained by Medhātithi³ as surrounded by earthen embankments. The urdurga (human fort) is described as garrisoned by an army of four divisions and filled with arms and heroic persons. However it need not be supposed that these detailed classifications were actually followed in practice. It would appear that features of the different types were utilised in strengthening any fort. For instance we find Kalhana in his Rājatarāṅgiṇī⁴ referring to a giridurga as surrounded by a dense forest and Stein,⁵ who had a remarkably intimate knowledge of the geog-

1. I p.31 v.39. Cf. Medhātithi on Manu, VII.70.

2. Medhātithi on Manu, VII.70.

3. Ibid.

4. VIII.2260.

5. Stein, Chronicles of Kashmir, II.229-30. Cf. his note on VIII.2528; see also Archaeological Survey Report, V.102ff; ibid., X1905-6, p.12.

raphy of Kashmir, points out that the typical site preferred for a hill fortress was a precipitous cliff sloping down to a river on one, two or even three sides with steep slopes falling away on the other side and on the highest point a fort serving as a citadel. If a fort was surrounded by thick forests the forest itself was evidently looked on as part of the fort, of which the actual structure was merely the strong point or citadel. The Hemacandrasūricarita¹ tells us that the strong fortification of Ajayameru (Ajmer), the capital of the Cāhamānas, consisted of a sixteen mile fence of acacia, khadira, badarī and other thorny bushes, which on one occasion kept the forces of the Caulukyas at bay and compelled them to retire. Al-'Utbi² observes about the fort of Āsī : "Around this fort there was an impenetrable and dense jungle, full of snakes which no enchanters could tame, and so dark that even the rays of the full moon could not be discerned in it. There were broad and deep ditches all around". Around Kulchand's fort also there was a forest through which the advance guard of Sultan Mahmūd had to penetrate like the comb through

1. Quoted by D. Sharma, Early Chauhān Dynasties, p. 52.

2. Elliot and Dowson, II p. 47.

¹
a head of hair.

The Devī Purāṇa² says that brick-built walls are indispensable in artificial forts.³ The Baragaon grant⁴ of Ratnapāla says that the impregnable city of Durjaya was encompassed by a rampart, and furnished with a strong fence which defended it like the cloth which protected the king's broad-chest. The ruins of the fort of Maṇḍavyapura durga in Rajasthan⁵ suggest that the width of the walls was some 24 or 25 feet. It was further strengthened and protected by bastions which are either square or rectangular; but the one at the north-west angle is circular. Among the remains of the old fortress unearthed by Colonel Hanny and Captain Dalton, the most interesting is the one found at the foot of the Duffla hills. "The fortification consisted of two stone walls, one on each side of the river (Buroi). The walls were some 10 feet in thickness, their inside being constructed from ordinary river stones ranging from 12 to 14 inches in breadth. These bear

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1. Ibid., p.43.
 2. LXXII.27. Parasūramā-pratāpa (Kane, History of Dharma-sāstra, III p.179) suggests that the wall of a fort may be of stones or baked bricks or of mud.
 3. This was probably due to the fact that this Purāṇa belongs to Bengal where stones for making fortresses were not easily available.
 4. J.A.S.B., LXVII.99ff 11.34-35.
 5. Archaeological Survey Report, 1909-10, pp.93-94.

distinct builders' marks on them¹.

As regards the height of the walls of the town the Devī Purāṇa² tells that it should be raised to nine hastas (cubits) according to the rules laid down by the munis presumably referring to architectural texts. The Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa³ says that the maximum height should be 20 hastas and a height loftier than that is not advisable.

The second important feature of fortification was the moat. The Matsya Purāṇa⁴ tells that the fort should have ditches girt with ramparts surrounded by towers on the walls. Al-'Utbi⁵, writing in connection with the fort of Āsī, remarks that "there were broad and deep ditches all around". Writing about the ruins of the ancient fortress found at the foot of the Duffla Hills Colonel Hannay and Captain Dalton also describes how behind the walls there were deep ditches.⁶ The Devī Purāṇa⁷ says that the number of ditches may be 2, 3, 4 or 8 as the ground requires. The Brahmāṇḍapurāṇa⁸ says that

1. Barua, Cultural History of Assam, p.65f.

2. LXXII.27.

3. CIII.420.

4. CCXVII.8.

5. Elliot and Dowson, I.47.

6. Barua, loc. cit., pp.65f.

7. LXXI.28.

8. VIII, 1.216.

the ditches were excavated with their mouths connected with rivers. According to the Devī Purāṇa¹ the drains of the town should clear themselves in these ditches. The cities of Dvārakā² and Avanti³ are described as being enclosed by ditches. Again Dvārakā⁴ was surrounded by as many as seven moats. The Navasāhasāṅkacarita⁵ tells that the ditches of the city of Avanti were as wide and deep as the river Yamunā itself.

The walls were broken by more than one gate. Al-Idrīsī⁶ remarks "Multan is a large city commanded by a citadel which has four gates and is surrounded by a moat."⁷

The Muslim accounts give high praise to the forts in northern India at the time of Muslim invasion. Even allowing for exaggeration, they seem to have been very strong. Thus Al-Idrīsī⁸ refers to Jandur, one mile from Multan as 'a collection of forts, strongly built, very high and well-equipped

1. LXXII, 1.55.

2. Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa, LXXII 1.13.

3. Brahmapurāṇa, XLI 1.50; Navasāhasāṅkacarita, I 1.25.

4. Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa, LXXII, 1.15.

5. I 1.36.

6. Elliot and Dawson, I p.82.

7. For a consolidated account see the description of the defences of the city of Kāmarūpa as given by Śrī Sitārāma-dāsa in his Dharmamangala poems.

8. Elliot and Dawson, I p.83.

with fresh water'. Al-Bīrūnī¹ describes Rājgiri and Lahore as 'the two strongest places I have ever seen'. Muslim narratives confess that it was because of these that Sultan Mahmūd could not accomplish his design of conquering Kashmir.² Writing about the fort of Kālāñjar Hasan Nizāmī³ remarks that it was "celebrated throughout the world for being as strong as the wall of Alexander". About the fort of Gwalior⁴ he indulges in rhetorical praise and says that it is "the pearl of the necklace of the castles of Hind, the summit of which the nimble-footed wind from below cannot reach, and on the bastion of which the rapid clouds have never cast their shade". Al-'Utbi⁵ refers to the fort of Bhātia as one whose walls the wings of an eagle could not "surmount, and which was surrounded as by the ocean with a ditch of exceeding depth and breadth". Regarding the fort of Ranathambhor, Minhāj-us-Sirāj⁶ records that it "is celebrated in all parts of Hindustan for its great strength and security. It is related in Hindu histories that it had been invaded by more than seventy

1. I.208.

2. Elliot and Dowson, II pp.455-66.

3. Ibid., p.231.

4. Ibid., p.227.

5. Ibid., pp.28-9.

6. Ibid., pp.324-25.

kings, and no one had been able to take it".

Similar praises were bestowed on the fortification of the cities. Thus Delhi¹ is described as "among the chief (mother) cities of Hind" consisting of "a fortress which in height and breadth had not its equal nor second throughout the length and breadth of the seven climes". Kanauj² is said to have had seven detached forts. Multan according to Al-Idrisi³ was a large city commanded by a citadel, which had four gates and was surrounded by a moat. Kiswini⁴ describes the city as "large, fortified and impregnable". Jalor⁵ is said to have been an exceedingly strongfort the gates of which had never before been opened by any conqueror and Thangar⁶ is described as a "fortress which resembled a hill of iron".

In our period we do not find any new device, improvement or development in the technique for capturing a fortress or a fortified city. Protected within the strong walls the besieged could nullify the attempts of the invader. Thus we

1. Ibid., p.216.

2. Ibid., pp.46, 458. It is not clear what the reference actually means : whether the city was protected by seven rings of walls or it was surrounded by seven forts on different sides.

3. Ibid., I p.82.

4. Ibid., p.96.

5. Ibid., II p.238.

6. Ibid., p.226. It is situated to the north of Bayana.

find that even mighty emperors could not do much against an enemy who possessed a strong fort. The attack on Paramāra king Dhārāvarṣa of Ābu made by Prthvīrāja was a failure¹, likewise he does not appear to have achieved any success in his attack on Kālañjar². The valour and weapons of the invader being of little consequence he had naturally to depend upon protracted blockade. In the accounts of the wars of this period we find siege as the most common method for reducing a fort to submission. The besieger could prolong the siege until the resources of the besieged were exhausted and he offered submission, or becoming desperate opened the gates of the forts to give open war, or else "left the fort at the time when the world had covered itself with the blanket of darkness"³. In conquering the fort of Pābiya king Chach resorted to this method. He encamped round the fort until the besieged found their store of provisions exhausted and grass, wood and fuel were all consumed⁴. In the Rājataranginī also we read of a similar attempt on the part of king Harṣa (1089-1101 A.D.) in

1. Pārtha-parākrama, p.43.

2. I.C., XI (1944), pp.59f.

3. Elliot and Dowson, I p.141.

4. Ibid.

his siege of the fort of Prthvigiri. He had almost succeeded, and the besieged garrison, with the exhaustion of its food and other supplies, was negotiating submission, when they were luckily saved by the disaffection in the ranks of the besiegers.¹ A graphic account of the method of siege and blockade is to be found in connection with the siege and capture of the fortress of Śirahśilā on the north-west frontier by king Jayasimha of Kashmir in 1140 A.D. The Lord of the Gate Udaya posted himself at the dranga or frontier watch-station most likely with a view to preventing the enemy's retreat into Kashmir proper. Dhanya, the royal general built rows of wooden huts for the besieging army on the bank of the river Madhumati, a step which, as rightly pointed out by Stein, was necessitated by the almost uninhabitable climate and ground of the area. The king ~~present~~ sent his generals immense supplies. "Though the troops thus stoutly kept their guard for three or four months, they were unable to seize those who were in the castle, because no such acts of hostility as the cutting off of food supplies were undertaken, which might

1. Rāj., VIII.1153-59. Cf. ibid., VII.1181-91 for an attempt to capture the fort of Dugdhaghāta by starvation being foiled by a sudden snowfall.

have reduced those arrogant (opponents) to straits". Realising the mistake the king directed to lay a regular siege to the castle. Dhanya moved closer to the main approach of the castle. He built a continuous line of block-houses round the castle ridge from the south, in which fire was kept burning at night so that even an ant could not move about without being noticed. Thus the scanty supplies which the besieged rebels were previously able to collect from the neighbouring hamlets were also effectively cut off. The royal troops further blocked the enemy's access to the water by boats which were constantly moving about on the river. Thus disheartened by the pain of thirst and the exhaustion of the food supply the dāmara lord of the castle yielded.¹

The recorded instances of siege by Hindu rulers of the period indicate that operations were generally unduly prolonged. Thus Chach laid siege of Brahmanabad under Akham Lohāna, but the siege lasted for the period of one year.² The siege of Tabarhindah by Cāhamāna Prthvīrāja III lasted for no less than thirteen months before the besieged garrison surrendered

1. Rāj., VIII.2505-2598.

2. Elliot and Dowson, I p.147.

on honourable terms.¹ From the Prabandha-cintāmaṇi² we learn that the fort of Dhārā resisted Siddharāja Caulukya for twelve years. Likewise Jayacandra, the Gāhaḍavāla king could not make any headway even after having besieged the capital of Paramardī, the Candella king for one year and had to retreat.³

A strange confirmation of these methods is forthcoming from the commentary of Medhātithi.⁴ He requires the siege to be laid in such a manner that no one is allowed to get out; the territories outside the fortress occupied by the enemy should be harassed by kidnapping the inhabitants and persecuting them in various ways; fodder should be spoilt by mixing undesirable things with it. He further advises that all kinds of water reservoirs should be destroyed by their source of supply being cut off by means of embankments.

It is however not to be suggested that there were no other devices of an active type on the part of the besieger. The Arthasāstra⁵ of Kauṭilya had enumerated five methods for captu-

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1. Raverty, Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī, I p.464.
 2. p.59 ll.3ff.
 3. Purātana-prabandha-saṅgraha, p.60.
 4. On Mann, VII.195.
 5. XIII.4.

ring a fortress : intrigue, pretending to retreat, winning over the people, actual siege and taking by assault. We find references to the use of these methods in the records bearing on this period. For instance Medhātithi¹ refers to the employment of the spies in connection with a siege. Through his spies the besieger shall also keep himself informed of all that the beleaguered enemy does in the way of inciting his own soldiers and foresters in the rear of his besieger, and of forming alliance with the intermediaries and neutrals. In the Prabandhacintāmaṇi² we read that when king Siddharāja could not capture the fort of Dhārā after a siege of twelve years his minister Muñjāla sent his spies to the crossings and pavements where the residents of Dhārā were discussing the siege. It was reported to him that a man was saying that the fort could be reduced only if the southern gate was assaulted, and he acted accordingly and with success. An attempt was also made to weaken the garrisons in the fort by sowing dissension. In the Rājataranginī³ we read that those in the fort of Śīraḥśīlā lost their confidence when they

1. On Manu, VII.197.

2. p.59.

3. VIII.2550.

saw that the besiegers were trying to win ~~an~~ over the guards, create internal dissension, and otherwise take advantage of a weak point.

The pervading belief in omens and superstitions influenced siege-craft also. The Agni Purāṇa¹ recommends the invading monarch to carefully note that part of the citadel over which the crows came in and went out, and concentrate his attack on that quarter. From Medhātithi² it would appear that a crafty besieger, would often take advantage of the superstitious beliefs of the besieged. He suggests that the besieger should frighten the besieged by means of men holding on their heads jars of flaming fire, and crying like the jackal; people seeing such portents would keep awake all night and become so fatigued that they would be easily reducible.³

Medhātithi⁴ advises that the ditch should be destroyed either by being filled up or by having an outlet made in its banks. He likewise suggests that a wall is destroyed by means of machines or by being undermined (prākāśasya yamtrair-

1. CCXXXII.

2. On Manu, VII.196.

3. Cf. Rāj., VIII.2560 - The royal troops kept them (the besieged) in excitement day and night by all possible means.

4. On Manu, VII.196.

vidāraṇam suraṅgayā vā bhaṅgaḥ). Bāṇa in his Kādambarī¹ mentions suraṅgabhedā as a part of the curriculum of studies prescribed for Candrāpīḍa. In the Tilakamañjarī there are some significant references to the devices for capturing fort. "People hidden by shields fastened on their head were digging at the bottom of the fencing wall. The diggers who had placed slabs above their heads were yearning to enter the inner fencing wall....The doors of the gateway² were being struck with axes.³ In the Prabandhacintāmaṇī⁴ king Siddharāja succeeds in breaking the door of the gate strengthened with iron chains with the help of his elephant but in using all its might the elephant breaks its bones and falls dead. From the Agni Purāṇa⁵ we learn that elephants were used to demolish wall turrets, battlements or trees. The appliance parigha defined

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1. Cf. V.S.Agrawal, P.I.H.C., 1949, p.33 explaining suraṅga says "After crossing the moat and the bridge there began a difficult passage through rock as a closed structure entry through which was essential to reach the main palace inside the fort".
 2. Pratolī, according to Monier-Williams "highway" can here mean nothing but the gate of the city.
 3. p.83 - Baddhaspharatirohitaṭapurusakanyamānaprākāramūla-bandhanāṇi...siraḥ-athitapharakaphārakaprāharyamānaprākāra-khandipravesāṇi...kuthārataditapratolikapāṭa...
 4. p.59.
 5. CCXXXVI.49.

in the Nītiprakāśa¹ has been interpreted as a battering ram² which must have been used in breaking the gates of the forts. Medhātithi advises the invader to assail the enemy in the fort at the breaches in the walls which should be attacked by brave soldiers.

In that age of chivalry and personal valour soldiers must not have been lagging behind when there was a need for actual assault. In the Rājatarāṅgiṇī³ we read that the royal troops in their siege of Bānasālā were throwing stones from catapults, showers of arrows and various other missiles. We again see⁴ that Vijayamala invested a fortified place and burnt the houses with his troops, who had fixed fire-brands to the points of their darts.

But when all has been said we must admit that the siegecraft of the Hindus had not much sting. They appear to have concentrated on passively blockading the fortress. Whatever devices and instruments they had would appear to have been not very effective. This weakness is indicated best by the fact that whereas Muhammad Ghūrī captured Tabarhindah within

1. II.20; V.45.

2. P.C.Chakravarti, Art of War, p.143 f.n.2.

3. VIII.1677.

4. Rāj., VII.766-72.

a few days Pr̥thvirāja III had to waste thirteen months in a similar operation.¹

The Agni Purāṇa² provides us with a list of five defects which seriously weakened the strength of a fort - the drying and silting up of the ditch with sand and mud, the bad and neglected condition of the ramparts and towers, the continuance in use of old, worn out and inefficient instruments and machines of warfare, a neglected arsenal, and an insufficient garrison of soldiers. We can see how far these precepts were actually put into practice from the description in the Tilaka-mañjarī³ of the preparations made at Kāñcīnagarī when it was threatened with siege. The neighbouring dry forests of the adjoining villages were being burnt, the outer reservoirs were being destroyed, grains were being stored in abundance, much grass and wood was collected, mud of old ponds and wells was taken out, all the weak and useless people were being turned out of the city, on the even ground at the foot of the walls was made uneven with heaps of stones, the passage desc-

1. D.Sharma, Early Chauhan Dynasties, p.215.

2. CCXLI.28.

3. p.82.

ending to the circular ditch was being made difficult, the entrance and exit of strangers was being stopped, an army of alert and trusted horsemen was being given the duty of guarding all the streets (pratolī), heaps of stones to be flung at the enemy were piled on the battlements, and the bordering areas were constantly filled by mobile troops of horsemen.

Obviously in a siege the first concern of the garrison in the fort was to have enough food to last for the period of the siege. The Śārngadhara-paddhati¹ advises that food-stuffs should be hoarded with care. The Nītivākyaṃṛta² says that in the absence of food, fuel and water a fort is no better than a prison house. The Mānasollāsa³ mentions manufactured articles, herbs, musical instruments, grass, fuel, molasses, all oils, clarified butter, honey, all the grains, cattle and cowdung as essential provisions for a siege. For use in a prolonged siege during which provisions run short Lakṣmīdhara⁵ suggests

1. No.1361.

2. p.80.

3. p.78 vv.52-4.

4. Vāditra - We can find no other meaning for this word. Possibly the text refers to conchs, bheris, etc. used for signalling and inspiring the troops. Otherwise the occurrence of this word in such a context gives a very significant comment on the nature of Hindu warfare at this time. It is however to be pointed out that our suggestion does not suit well other terms listed here which refer to foodstuffs or provisions used in preparing meals.

5. Kṛtyakalpataru, Rājadharmā, pp.46-47.

collection of various condiments, prepared from named ingredients, which have nourishing and hunger-resisting properties. Though it is generally suggested that to have craftsmen of all kinds, soldiers, cattle, horses, as well as elephants in a fortress¹, Lakṣmīdhara very significantly observes that it should not be ~~an~~ over-crowded with unnecessary people.²

The Mānasollāsa³ gives munitions of war and weapons priority in its list of essentials for a fort and says that it should contain war engines (yantra) and many missiles, a good collection of the best weapons, stones and also sand⁴ in abundance. Lakṣmīdhara suggests that deadly cobras should be kept in pots, to be thrown on besieging enemy⁵. It would appear that the most effective weapon of the fort garrison was stones and boulders hurled on the besiegers. In the Rājatarāṅginī we find the people of Dugdhaghāta throwing big boulders and other missiles on the besiegers. Likewise the people of Bānāsālā defended themselves by throwing stones from catapults,

1. Ibid., pp.41-42.

2. Ibid., p.46.

3. p.78 vv.549-51.

4. Sand could have been used for extinguishing fire. But it is more likely that it was thrown into the eyes of the invading soldiers who thus temporarily blinded could easily be overpowered.

5. Kṛtyakalpataṛṇ, Rājadharmā, p.46.

6. VII.1181.

showers of arrows and various other missiles. The royal army though large could not attack those in the castle, while stones were falling and arrows marked with bhikṣu's name¹.... Notwithstanding their great number the besiegers were so repulsed by the hail of stones that they gave up the assault.² In the Kānhaḍadeprabandha we read of machines to bombard the enemy with stones.³ In the Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra⁴ we have reference to many ingenious machines of great help in siege warfare, e.g., the door-keeper machine and warrior-machine to prevent undesirables from entering the gates of the city, machines with arrows and other weapons.⁵ The way in which these forts capitulated before the Muslim invaders would suggest that these machines spoken of in the indigenous literary records were mostly of a crude type not very effective

1. VIII.1677-78.

2. D.Sharma, Early Chauhān Dynasties, p.212. Cf. Vasudeva-hindī, 3 for mechanical weapons like śatghī and kālacakra installed on the gates of the fort to thwart the invading army.

4. XXXI.106-116. Cf. Vaijayanṭī, p.108 ll.98-99.

5. He probably imagines some figures, made of wood or metal, which functioned at the approach of an outsider or were made to do so by some one who controlled them from his seat within the fort. We do not think that such machines were in actual use. Probably the writer got the idea from some mechanical toys and using his fertile imagination, which is shown by other similar references in the work, conceived of these machines.

1. Presumably the names of locally respected Buddhist monks were looked on as bestowing magical powers on the arrows.

against the invaders. We find the garrison under Rānī Bāi, the wife of Dāhir, when besieged by the Arabs raining stones from mangonels and ballistas as well as arrows and javelins.¹ In the Hammīramahākāvya² the besieged are described as throwing hot oil on the besiegers and trying to set fire to the enemy's towers by means of burning arrows. The Tilakamañjarī³ gives brief but graphic references to the activities of the besiegers. We read that for a short while the sky appeared to have turned into land by the constant throwing of stones; the compact groups of foot-soldiers were scattering at the showers of iron-hot oil thrown by the engines of the besieged; the men seated on elephants ~~were~~ leapt in terror from their seats, which were set alight by firebrands. The author seems to allow himself a certain amount of licence, however, when he refers to the golden crowns of the kings melting away from the heat of the incendiary arrows. There was a rain of fierce falling stones.

But a study of the relevant sources, especially of the Muslim accounts, will indicate that the besieged generally

1. Cf. Ishwari Prasad, A Short History of Muslim Rule, pp.33f.

2. XIII.42-47.

3. p.83.

relied on the massive size of their strong walls which fostered in them a wrong notion of security; they never paid due attention to active defence and did little to develop this side of their resources.¹ Their main concern was to wear out the patience of the besiegers. This would follow from the Agni Purāṇa which in enumerating the good features of a fort requires it to be kālasaḥam (enduring for a long time).² Another factor which must have greatly weakened the positive aspect of defence was the growing popularity of ritualism. Even Lakṣmīdhara³ advises to keep in the forts a number of brāhmaṇas learned in the Vedas and maintaining the sacred fire who might perform sacrifices and rituals to placate the gods for providing protection. The growing use of such methods would justify the new type of fort dharmadurga (fort guarded by dharma) which the late work Harīhara-caturāṅga⁴ introduces in its list of six types of forts.

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1. Cf. Chau Ju-kua, p.98 about Anhilvada : "The only resistance which they offer is to lock their gates. In a few days provisions run short and (the raiders) withdraw of their own accord".
 2. CCXXXIX.29.
 3. Kṛtyakalpataru, Rājadharmā, p.41.
 4. Dikshitar, War in Ancient India, p.256.

CHAPTER V + ASSIGNMENT TO OFFICERS AND ROYAL KINSMEN

Unfortunately there are not many references directly bearing on the mode of payments to officers during the early mediaeval period. The legal texts and nīti works such as the Yuktikalpataru and the Mānasollāsa are totally silent on this point. We have only a very brief observation by Medhātithi. Commenting on the passage in Manu¹ postulating payment to officers of administrative units by grants of land, he observes that all this is only recommendatory and should not be literally applied to and that it only means that a salary commensurate with the position and responsibilities of each officer should be granted. The remarks of Medhātithi are not very explicit but they can be construed to imply that payment in cash was also in vogue.

At least, it would follow from the combined testimony of Hsüan Tsang and the Harsacarita² discussed elsewhere that in the seventh century the state officers were mostly paid in the form of land-grants. This would appear to have been the

1. VII.118-19.

2. See supra pp. 47 f.

common practice in our period as well.

There is a complete absence of the coins of some of the dynasties, such as the Pālas and the Senas. Some others, such as the Gāhaḍavālas, the Cāhamānas, and the Caulukyas, etc., do not seem to have issued a regular and complete currency in all the three chief metals and in all the denominations. Further, it is only a few kings, sometimes only one in a dynasty, who issued coins. It is quite likely that sometimes older coins remained in circulation. But there is always the possibility that the paucity of the coins available for this period would make a case against the prevalence of coins in paying the state officers.¹

From the ninth century we get epigraphic references to land-grants made to state officials and these increase in number from the ~~1~~² eleventh century. But the records which have come down are few compared with the number of officers in the different kingdoms of the period. The difference appears all the more striking in view of the much larger number of epigraphs recording religious grants. The reason is to be

1. J.E.S.H.O., IV.99f.

2. Ibid., 70f.

attributed to the fact that whereas the religious grants, meant to secure spiritual merit, were intended to last for ever and were therefore recorded on durable material, there was no corresponding need to preserve the land-grants made to an officer. It follows from the smṛtis of Yājñavalkya¹ and Brhaspati² that the secular grants were written on perishable material. In the Lekhapaddhati³ also the term used for assignments made to a rānaka and a rājaputra is bhūrja-pattalā. It is clear that these assignments were made on perishable material such as the birch-bark. In a story from the Bṛhat-kathākośa⁴ similar assignments made by a king to his sāmantas appear to have been on cloth or some such other material. We read in the Tilakamañjarī⁵ that the charter for the enjoyment of certain provinces which a prince received was conveyed on

1. I.318-20.

2. q. in Vyavahāraśeyūkhā, pp.25-27.

3. p.7.

4. IX.21-23. These are referred to as grāmapattanadeśānām patrikāśāsanāni. Later on śāsanāni and patrikā are split. Another verse refers to patrikāgundikādikam. The use of the word patrikā is contrasted with śāsaṇa which is generally known to have been on copper-plate.

5. p.103 - Rājñā samādiṣṭaḥ Sudrṣṭināmākṣapaṭalikaḥ praviśya paṭṭakāropita-niravaśeṣaviśeṣamabhyarṇavartibhiranekaibh Kaśmīrādimaṇḍalapratiḥbaddhaiḥ pradhānanagaragrāmaṣirupetaḥ kumārabhuktāvakhilamutṣārapathamarṣayāmbabhūva.

a piece of cloth. It is likely that in some cases the recipients of these secular grants were quite influential and strong and, taking a lesson from their religious counterparts, could press the king to issue these grants on durable material especially when the grants were~~m~~ meant to last long.

We have some inscriptions recording the grant of villages made to different~~t~~ state officials in different parts of northern India. Thus Bhavadeva, who was a minister of king Harivarmadeva (c. 1075-1125 A.D.), claims that one of his ancestors had been granted a village by the king of Gauḍa.¹ From three land-grants we know that the Somavaṃśī king Mahābhavagupta I (c. 935-970 A.D.) had assigned four villages to his brāhmaṇa chief minister Sādhāraṇa.² Devānanda III, the Nanda ruler, granted a village to his kāyastha minister for peace and war.³ An astrologer named Jagadhara Śarma received two villages, one from king Yaśabhañjadeva of Kīñjallī⁴ and the other from the latter's younger brother.⁵ King Anantavarman Coṭagaṅga assigned to one of his trustworthy agents a

1. *E.I.*, III no.4 vv. 6-7.

2. *Ibid.*, no.47.

3. *Ibid.*, XXIX no.26.

4. *Ibid.*, XVIII no.29.

5. *Ibid.*, XIX no.43.

village with a hamlet.¹ King Nṛsiṃha II granted two villages to his minister kumāra mahāpātra Bhīmadeva.² King Yaśaḥpāla of the Pratihāra dynasty gave a village to a certain māthura Vikāṣa³ who was most probably a kāyastha official. The Gāhādavāla records reveal that the chief priest Jāguka received in all the grant of ten pattalās, while his son, who succeeded him to the same office, obtained eight pattalās more.⁴ Kṣatriya Rājyavardhana, who also most probably had the official designation of a mahāmahattaka like his father and grand-father, is found receiving six land-grants in the reign of king Jayacandra.⁵ From the Ajayagadh inscription of Bhojavarman⁶ we learn that king Gaṇḍa granted by a charter a village to Jājūka of a distinguished kāyastha family whom he had appointed to superintend at all times all the affairs of the state and that king Kīrtivarman likewise gave to Māheśvara, another member of the same kāyastha family, for rendering service to

1. E.I., III.174.

2. J.A.S.B., LXI.254-6.

3. J.R.A.S., 1927, p.694.

4. J.E.S.H.O., IV.82f.

5. R.Niyogi, History of the Gāhādavāla Dynasty, p.223.

6. E.I., I.333-35.

Kīrtivarman in the Pīṭasāila viṣaya, the title of Viśiṣa¹ of Kalinjar and the grant of the village of Pipalāhikā to be his for ever. According to the Devapattana inscription of Śrī-²dhara king Cāmuṇḍa bestowed a village on mahāmantrin Nādhava.

It appears that such grants were generally permanent as has been clearly recorded in some cases. We feel that these cases are not those of state officers being granted the villages in lieu of salaries. If such had been the case there was not much sense in making a special mention of it in the records when village grants went along with their services as a matter of course. Moreover, in most cases the recipients appear to have been occupying their position long before they got the village. Some of the grants make it quite clear that the officers received the villages as a special favour of the king. Thus an inscription of the tenth century from Gorakhpur

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1. The Ajaygadh rock inscription of Candella king Kīrtivarman (E.I., XXX no.17 v.8) records the grant of the village of Pipalāhikā and the authority over the gates of the Kalanjar fort (Kālañjara-dvāravarādhikāra) to Māheśvara by Kīrtivarman in recognition of the services which the former rendered when the latter was in distress at Pītādri. This new Ajaygadh inscription thus makes it clear that viśiṣa was the designation of the officer who had authority over the gates of a fort and may be considered to be the commander of a fort - *ibid.*, p.88.
 2. E.I., II.439-46 v.12.

clearly says that the village which the minister (saciva) Madoli granted to the goddess Durgā, had been received by him through the favour of king Jayāditya¹, most probably a feudatory of the Gurjara-Pratihāras. It would appear that sometimes the king pleased with an officer for some valuable service performed by him gave a village over and above the usual remuneration he was receiving. It has been suggested in a recent study² that the pattalās which Jāguka, the chief priest of the Gāhādavalas, received were the annual payments for his services. We feel, however, that the suggestion could not have worked out in practice because the number of pattalās being obviously limited such annual grants even to the important officers of the state would have soon exhausted the number of pattalās at the disposal of the emperor.

Though it is doubtful whether the grants mentioned here were a form of remuneration for state service, they indicate some kind of feudal practice. These assignments gave to the officers the status of feudal chiefs as the lords of the villages granted to them. The relatively few recorded cases

1. I.A., XXI.170-71.

2. J.E.S.H.O., IV.82f.

can also mean that land-grants constituted a special favour by the king. In any case the existence of such grants suggests a society where coined money was not in much circulation which in turn makes a strong case for land-grants and not cash being the usual mode of payment.

We have other evidence which indicates more clearly that the regular officials were often remunerated in the form of village grants.¹ In an inscription of the Cāhamānas of Sākambharī² we have a reference to the religious grant of a village which a duhsādhyā³ made out of his fief. It is signi-

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1. It has been inferred from the expression vikara-grāmāḥ in the Chandravatī grant of Candradeva dated A.D. 1093 (E.I., XIV no.15 p.195 ll.27-30) that even some regular officials were granted villages - J.E.S.H.O., IV.85f. Kielhorn (E.I., VII.96ff) took the term to be the proper name of a village. D.R.Sahni (E.I., XIV.196) translates it to mean villages given to persons deprived of hand. But such a suggestion looks improbable because for it envisages too many men deprived of hands to need several villages for their maintenance, and because it suggests a lop-sided emphasis on the maintenance for persons thus disabled and not for others who stood in greater needs. The expression has no doubt to be translated as meaning tax-free villages; there is, however, nothing to indicate that these villages were granted to officials. The inscription records the grant of a pattalā to 500 brāhmanas the people in which are required to pay the state dues to the donees. But an exception is made in the case of villages formerly given to temples or brāhmanas or as vikaras (devadvijavikaragrāmāḥ). The inscription goes on to enumerate the names of villages under three heads, devagrāmas, dvijagrāmas and vikaragrāmas. The clear implication of the inscription is that like

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ficant that the record mentions it along with other grants made by members of the royal family from their estates and feudal assignments. As the duṣṣādhyā had to seek the permission of his master his right to the assignment was obviously limited. According to a copper plate dated A.D. 1260⁴ king Jayavarman II caused a certain pratihāraṃ (head of the palace-guard) to donate a village to three brāhmaṇas. Obviously this officer possessed the village as his assignment because it is he who is said to have performed the religious ceremonies connected with the grant but he had to do it with the permission of his master who signed it and made it a royal charter. An inscription of Mahendrapāla II⁵ which records the grant of a village by the emperor in the possession of talavarggika Hariṣaḍa indicates that the officer had been given the village

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the devagrāmas and dvijagrāmas the vikara-grāmas were also exempted from paying the dues to the donees. We would prefer to take the term as referring to villages which had earned freedom from taxes due to some kind of service performed to the kingdom.

2. E.I., II no.8.

3. The precise meaning of the term is doubtful. It may mean one who catches dangerous robbers, thus having been a police officer.

4. E.I., IX no.13 (B).

5. E.I., XIV.182-84 (Part I).

but had only a limited right in the sense that the king could give it to another person. A more abiding claim of these officers is suggested by the inscription¹ in which king Vākpati-rāja is said to have re-granted to a goddess a village when requested by the wife of the mahāsādhnika Mahāika who obviously had received it as an assignment earlier. A regent of five districts under king Vajrahasta of the Gaṅga dynasty is found giving a village to the bridegroom on the occasion of the marriage of his daughter.² This naturally suggests that this high officer had received more than one village from his empire. A similar inference can be drawn from the claim made by Bhavadeva, a minister, that he increased his land by military feats.³ The land which a brāhmaṇa officer of king Vighraha-pāla III is said to have granted out of his own possession with the permission of the king⁴ was most probably part of the land assigned to him as a service tenure. The Pāla records refer to the land allotted to the kaivarttas as remuneration⁵ for their services.

1. I.A., XIV.160.

2. E.I., III no. 31.

3. Ibid., no. 4 v.12.

4. E.I., XXIX no. 8.

5. J.A.S.B (L), 1951, p.121; E.I., XXIX no.5.

We have some literary references also which corroborate these epigraphic records in making a case for the grant of land to state officers as service tenure. The Rājatarāṅginī¹ informs us that king Avantivarman divided his kingdom among his relatives and officers, most probably in the form of estates and feudal assignments. The village which Suyya, the engineer, granted to the brāhmaṇas² would appear to have been out of his service assignments. The Kumārapālacarita³ mentions the minister of the king as enjoying seven hundred villages. The title maḥamāndaleśvara applied to the minister of Prthvī-rāja III Cāhamāna in the Kharataragaacchagurvāvali⁴ can be taken to indicate that he had been granted a whole mandala as his assignment. In some cases at least the service tenure would appear to have been of a permanent nature. Thus, in the Udayasundarikathā⁵ we have a reference to a kāyastha officer enjoying a tenure which was permanent and hereditary.

There are some indications to suggest that sometimes

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1. V.21 - Vibhajya bandhubhṛtyeṣu bubhuje pārthivab śriyam.
 2. V.120.
 3. (N.S.P) Introduction, p. x.
 4. D.Sharma, Early Chauhān Dynasties, p.198.
 5. p.152 - pūrvapurūṣakramāgatāyā dhruvavṛtteḥ prabhuḥ.

some of the state officers were assigned shares in the revenue from a village. It is not clear whether they received part of the usual share of the state or an additional charge on the part of the villagers. The latter possibility seems more likely. It is also not clear if these charges were in place of regular salaries or were additional assignments. We would prefer to take them as assignments in place of salaries. In any case it is apparent that state servants were remunerated with land rather than with salaries in cash. Thus, the taxes for pattakilas (village headmen) and duhsādhyas (police officers) are included in the list of rights and incomes transferred to the donee in a grant of Jayasinha.¹ In the copper plates of mahārājaputra Govindacandra of the Gāhāḍavāla dynasty we have references to three terms akṣapaṭalaprastha or akṣapaṭalādāya, pratihāraprastha and viśatiathūprastha or vimsaticohavatha.² These were the shares of the produce, most probably a prastha from every household, which the officers known as akṣapaṭalika, pratihāra and viśatiathu received.³ There is nothing to indicate

1. C.I.I., IV no.63.

2. R.Niyogi, History of the Gāhāḍavāla Dynasty, p.167.

3. J.E.S.H.O., IV.86f.

the mode in which these state servants used to collect these charges for themselves. It is natural to suppose that those on the spot such as the paṭṭakilas would have collected their shares themselves along with the state dues. In the case of others it would appear more likely that the state machinery for the realisation of taxes collected the dues meant to remunerate these officers also which they subsequently received from their respective headquarters. From the Candella inscriptions we learn that petty state servants, forest officials and the village police had some rights in the villages which they were required to transfer to a donee in case of a religious grant.¹ From these references it may be inferred that these rights of state officers were of a very limited type and could never have developed into anything like a fief. In some cases, however, even such rights to revenues would appear to have acquired a more lasting character. Thus, we see in an inscription from Marwar that under king Aśvarāja the mahā-sāhaniya (Great Master of Stables) granted to a temple his share of barley realised from every one of the Persian wheel

1. E.I., XVI no.2 - Rāja-rājapurusaṭavika-cātādibhiḥ avam avamābhāvyam parihartavyam.

2. E.I., XI no.4 (III) - Arahatam arahatam prati dattah jaya-hārahah ekah.

wells (arahata) of four villages. It is fair to suggest that the share of barley which this officer received was like the prastha charges attributed to three Gāhaḍavāla officers. What is significant in this case is the fact that the ~~empire~~ state officer had such a right over the item of revenue that he could transfer or donate it to others without having to seek permission from his master.

In the administrative set-up of northern India in the early mediaeval period the feudal hierarchy and the bureaucracy appear to have got jumbled together in a curious manner.¹ With the growing tendency to remunerate the officers in the form of assignments of land and to appoint feudatories to different posts in the empire the demarcation line between officers on the one hand and the feudatories and feudal chiefs on the other tended to get blurred. This amounted to

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1. The Sukranīti I.377-84 says : "Those servants who have been appointed equal with sāmantas and others are also to be known as sāmantas etc. in succession and to be sharers of the royal income. Those who have been deprived of the post of the sāmantas etc. but who are maintained by the mahārājas and others at the same salary are called hina-sāmanta. The man who is appointed over 10 grāmas is known as nāyaka. The āsāpāla is he who enjoys the revenue of 10,000 grāmas also known as svarāṭ."

a general weakening of the traditions of bureaucratic administration and the growing emphasis on the feudal elements in the administrative system.

In the epigraphic records from different parts of northern India we often find that the state officers had titles of rāuta, ṭhakkura and rāṇaka attached to their names. We have seen elsewhere¹ that these titles stood for feudal chiefs, which position the officers came to occupy through land assignments in lieu of their salaries. We also find that rājānaka, which was originally a title of a feudal chief, was extended to the ministers in the Chamba state.² It is interesting to note that the Rājatarangīnī³ also employs rājānaka as the usual title of ministers in Kashmir. There are also examples where rājaputra and mahārājaputra, which were titles of feudal chiefs, were used for officials also.⁴ It has to be noted that the Kharataragacchagurvāvalī mentions the minister of Prthvirāja III as a mahāmaṇḍalesvara.⁵ Two explanations can be given. It is likely that this minister was assigned a maṇḍala for enjoyment as his service tenure.

1. See *infra* pp. 217-26.

2. Vogel, Antiquities of Chamba State, Part I p.114.

3. VI.117 f.n.

4. I.A., XVIII.212 f.n. 3.

5. D.Sharma, Early Chauhan Dynasties, p.72.

The second possibility is that he was a feudatory who had been appointed as a minister at the imperial court. Maṇḍaleśa, which was often used as a title by independent feudatories, significantly appears in the Rājatarāṅgiṇī¹ as the designation of provincial governors.

At the same time we find that the feudal chiefs were being looked upon as a part of the administrative machinery of the state. In the Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra² sāmanta has been mentioned in the midst of different officers of the state. In the Varṇaratnākara³ also sāmantas, māṇḍalīkas and forest chiefs (vana-rāṭas) are enumerated as servants of the king (rājasevaka).

There was now no sharp distinction between the officers and the feudal chiefs.⁴ The practice of conferring honour on a feudal chief by various devices was being extended to officers

1. VI.73; VII.996; VIII.1228, 1814, 2029.

2. I p.275.

3. p.64.

4. Cf. Sukranīti I.377-78 : Those servants who have been appointed equal with the sāmantas and others are also to be known as sāmanatas etc. in succession and to be sharers of royal income.

also. From the Aparājita-prcchā¹ we learn that like the different grades of feudatories and feudal chiefs there were distinct rules for the houses and conveyances of the high officials. How the state officers with feudal rights gradually tended to become feudal chiefs is indicated in the Kathāsarit-sāgarāṃ² which speaks of a royal priest enjoying a thousand villages and the privilege of chattra and vāhana just like a sāmanta (sāmanta-tulya). In the Brhatkathākośa³ also a warrior appointed to the post of a sahasrabhaṭa had many villages as assignments and is called a sāmanta. We have many records in which the mahāsāndhivigrahika officers are also styled sāmantas and have the special feudal honour of the pañcamahāśabda.⁴ The records of the Caulukyās of Gujarat

1. pp. 203f vv.14-15, 30.

2. Lambaka 3, Taraṅga 18 vv.124-26. It is interesting to note that in the Kākatīya kingdom the appointment of a person to the office of a minister was invariably accompanied by the conferment of special insignia like the palanquin, the white umbrella and a special dress and the grant of the jīvita or vṛtti (land) pertaining to that office (niyoga) besides presents of costly ornaments and perfumes. See G. Yazdani, Early History of the Deccan, p.673.

3. p.59 (XXXV.1ff).

4. E.I., X.89; C.I.I., IV.137-45.

provide us with an instance of an officer being made a feudatory with distinctive feudal honours attached to his name. Vaijalladeva appears in some earlier inscriptions as a military governor (danḍanāyaka) but in a later inscription he is called mahāmaṇḍaleśvara, had attained the pañcamahāśabdas and was governing the Narmadātata-maṇḍala through the favour of his overlord king Ajayapāla¹.

We thus see that the officers were remunerated in terms of feudal assignments, though there is no specific reference in the legal texts and the epigraphic and literary records of the period. The paucity of coins and the references to kings awarding \pm villages to officers when pleased with them indicate a feudal economy. The officers are found owning villages which they most probably received as remuneration from their king who had a superior right over them. Some of the lower officers would seem to have received specific shares in revenue as their remuneration. All this naturally gave a semi-feudatory status to the officers. Some of the feudatories were probably given some of the higher posts in the empire. Thus we find

1. I.A., XVIII.80-85. Cf. A.K.Majumdar, Chaulukyas of Gujarat, pp. 225f.

that the line of demarcation between officers and feudatories was gradually becoming dim.

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Another practice which in our period resulted in the kingdoms being parcelled out into a number of feudal estates was that of granting villages or ~~the~~ land assignment to members of the royal family in particular and to other chiefs of the same tribe in ^egeneral. Such grants were more common in the clan monarchies of our period. The system naturally weakened the central power by reducing the area under the direct control of the state.

We find that bestowing honour on the kinsmen and providing for their maintenance was definitely regarded as the ideal for a king.² Lakkhana in his Apuvayaragana Paiba (A.D. 1257)

1. Baden Powell, Land System, I p.250; Indian Village Community, pp. 196ff uses the term clan monarchies for monarchies organised on clan line and thus differing from the type of single rulership. Under this system the king has the best or the central part of the kingdom for himself and assigns remaining portions to the lesser chiefs of the clan.
2. The Sukraniti says : If in the king's family there be many males, the eldest among them is to be the king, the others are to be his assistants and auxiliaries. More than all other assistants these members of the aristocracy help forward the interests of the state - I.684-86. The king should station them in various quarters by paying them one-fourth of the royal revenues or make them governors of provinces. He may appoint them as the heads of cows, elephants, horses, camels, treasure, etc. The mother and
(continued)

praises king Āhavamalla for maintaining his kinsmen with honour and presents.¹ According to the Acalesvara inscription dated A.D. 1319 when the Asuras (i.e. the Muslims) had destroyed the kṣatriyas Lāvanyakarna of the Cāhamāna family of Candravatī and Abu devoted himself to the protection of his tribesmen and their lands.² The Agni Purāṇa³ says that the friends of the king's relatives should receive the remuneration fixed by his ancestors. Somadeva discusses the policy to be pursued in the case of kinsmen in some detail. He appears to have realised the baneful effect of the policy of granting feudal assignments to kinsmen. In his Nītivākyaṃṛta⁴ he warns the king against bestowing honours upon his kinsmen,

continued)

the lady who is of the same rank as the mother should be appointed in charge of the kitchen. Cognate kinsmen and brothers-in-law are to be even appointed in the military department. Critics of one's own faults are to be appointed in the overseeing of clothes, ornaments and vessels - I.697-704. Later on it says that the king should always be accompanied by his kinsmen, friends and the state officers who have been made equal to him through qualifications - I.747-48.

1. Rāhula Sāṃkṛtyāyana, Hindī Kāvya Dhārā, p.446 - Sammāṇa-dāna-posiṇa sabamdhū.
2. v.25 - Nīte kṣayam kṣatravare'surairyaḥ svagotrāgopāla-parāyaṇo'bhūta q. by D.Sharma, Early Chauhan Dynasties, p.175 f.n. 13.
3. CCXXXIX.31 - Fitrapaitāmaho vaśyaḥ samhato dattavetanah.
4. XXIV.57-64. It uses kulya and dāyāda indiscriminately.

and especially against granting positions which may lead to an increase in their military force and their revenue. He suggests, however, that the king may favour a kinsman or a son who does not make a false show of loyalty and has never gone against him, and likewise appoint him to a suitable post. The king should bring under his control kinsmen with a large following by winning their confidence through trustworthy persons or by setting spies on them and should turn away an evil-minded son or a kinsman from his purpose by proper reasoning.

Though kingship normally descended to the eldest prince and was not shared by other princes as a patrimony to be divided among all the sons, there are many instances in the history of our period when brothers and near relatives were assigned virtually independent kingdoms.¹ The classic example comes from the Kalacuri dynasty. From the Kalacuri records

1. Cf. Sukranīti, I.695-96 - By the partition of kingdom there can arise no good. Rather the kingdom divided into parts is exposed to enemies. In the preceding passage (I.691-94) the Sukranīti calls these members of the royal family as dāyāda (sharers of inheritance) and says : Unity of opinion among them is good for the king. Differences among them are dangerous to both the state and the family. Hence the king should arrange for them the same kind of comforts as for himself, and should be strict in command to the servants in satisfying them with umbrellas and thrones.

we learn that king Kokkala had eighteen sons the eldest of whom became the king of Tripuri and made his seventeen brothers feudatory chiefs in the neighbourhood.¹ In Kashmir this mistake was often committed by rulers with very disastrous results for the unity of the kingdom. Queen Diddā nominated Saṅgrāma-rāja to succeed her to the throne and appointed Vighraharāja as ruler over the fortress of Lohara. The mistake was rectified by Utkarṣa who united the two kingdoms. Once again there was a division after the death of Harṣa with Uccala ruling in Kashmir and his brother Sussala in Lohara. In A.D. 1112 Sussala once again amalgamated the two kingdoms. For some time Jayasimha managed to control Lohara with great difficulty but in the end he found the solution of the problem by crowning his son Gulhana as the ruler of Lohara.² In Orissa we find that king Uddyotakesarī Mahābhavagupta IV of the Somavamśī dynasty appointed Abhimanyu as the sub-king of the western part of his empire.³ The Padmānanda Mahākāvya,⁴ written towards the middle of the thirteenth century, relates the

1. Cf. C.I.L., IV.401ff v.6 - Tatrāgrājo nṛpavarastripurīśa āsitparśve ca maṇḍalapatin sa cakṛa bandhūn.

2. B.P.Mazumdar, Socio-Economic History, p.15.

3. J.O.H.R.S., I.279.

4. v.45.

story of king Vajranābha who distributed his kingdom among his four brothers.¹

The Kathākoṣa² gives a story about a king who established his elder son as a crown-prince and gave to the younger a kingdom in Ujjayinī as an 'apanage for a prince' (kumārabhukti). In another story in the same text the father of prince Amara-candra, pleased with the extraordinary courage of his son, is said to have given him the apanage of a prince.³

It was very common in our period for kings to grant feudal assignments to their relations and kinsmen. According to the Rājatarāṅginī⁴ king Avantivarman of Kashmir divided his kingdom, presumably in the form of feudal assignments, among his relatives and officers. From the Chach-nāma⁵ it would appear that in Sind it was quite usual for a king to assign to his relations the rulership over different parts of the kingdom or chieftainship of the forts which controlled

1. The Padma-nanda Mahākāvya written by Abhayacandra at the request of minister Padma under Viśaladeva is not a historical text but such a theme in the literary texts suggests that it was not an unusual phenomenon for the period.
2. pp. 117f.
3. p. 38.
4. V. 21 - Vibhajya bandhubhṛtyebhāḥ bubhuje pāṛthivāḥ śriyam.
5. Elliot and Dowson, I. 142, 151, 158, 174, 175.

different areas.

With the appearance of the clan monarchies we find many references to assignments made to the kinsmen. It would appear that the tribe had an important hand in the formation of these monarchies and hence their chiefs had to be appeased. It is also likely that these tribes had a high sense of loyalty towards their kinsmen and so the other members of the tribe had some claim over the king. This bond of community in these tribes is suggested by the India Office plate of Vijaya-rāga¹deva which on paleographic considerations can be assigned to the ~~twelfth~~ ^{eleventh} or twelfth century. It records the grant to two men Vighrahapāla, son of Dusala, and Mūladeva, son of Kusuara, belonging to the Palha clan. The grant is said to have been of those parts of the feudal estate of Kesarikoṭṭa which were hitherto not enjoyed by Mūladeva. Another part of the same plate records that out of this the village of Potā was to be enjoyed by Vighrahapāla and his descendants alone. In one case the plate specifically lays down that no tribesman has any claim over the assignment and

1. E.I., III.313f.

in the other that no other man of the Palha tribe has any claim to it. These clauses would suggest that usually the other members of the tribe also had some claim over a feudal assignment but have been waived aside in the present case.

An inscription from Rajasthan dated 725 A.D.¹ speaks of the estate of Dhavagarttā enjoyed by Dhanika a chief of the Guhila tribe under king Dhavalappadeva. It appears that division of the kingdom among tribesmen was recognised even in those times as a characteristic feature of the Pratihāras, and it was therefore natural that they formed the main strength of the Pratihāra army. It is interesting to note that² the Begumra plate of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas which records the defeat of king Bhoja I of the Pratihāra dynasty at the hands of Dhruva, the Rāṣṭrakūṭa chief of the Gujarat branch, in lauding the power of the former describes him as "united to fortune and surrounded by crowds of noble kinsmen". We learn³ from an inscription from Rajor (Alwar) dated A.D. 958 which

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1. E.I., XII p.11. The inscription is now deposited in the Victoria Hall, Udaipur.
 2. I.A., XII.179. In the Śukranīti I.707-721 the members of the royal family are contemplated as playing important part in the deliberations. The text lays down fixed seats in the assembly-hall for the several relations of the king.
 3. E.I., III.266f - svabhogāvāptavaṃśapotakabhoga.

states that under the imperial Pratihāra dynasty a chief named Mathanadeva belonging to this lineage had received the estate named Vamśapataka as an allotment for his enjoyment.

The system of making assignments to chiefs of the tribe continued under other clan monarchies which emerged into power during the decline of the Pratihāra kingdom. An inscription dated A.D. 973 from Harsha (Jaipur)¹ indicates that under the Cāhamānas of Śākambharī the kinsmen of the king had in their private possession villages and hamlets which they had received as assignments from the king (svabhogāvāpta) and which they could dispose of at will. The personal estates referred to in this inscription include those of king Siṃharāja, his two brothers, Vatsarāja and Vigharāja, and his two sons Candrarāja and Govindarāja. Under the Cāhamānas of Nadol there are several records testifying to the apportionment of land among the kinsmen of the ruling chief. In an inscription from

1. E.I., II.119ff ll.33-40. Professor R.S.Sharma, J.E.S.H.O., IV.87 suggests that Jayanīrāja of the record was a distant kinsman of the king Siṃharāja. But the inscription does not give any such indication. On the other hand if the use of svabhoga in the case of the members of the royal family and that of svabhuḥjyamāna in the case of the duḥsādhyā officers Dhamdhuka and Jayanīrāja are deliberate, then the possibility would be just otherwise.

Sevādī (Jodhpur) dated A.D. 1143¹ we find that under king Kaṭudeya the crown-prince Jayatasīha was enjoying the possession of Samīpāṭī (Sevādī). The extent of decentralisation appears from the fact that even in a small kingdom like Nadol the epigraphs indicate that in the reign of Kelhana only the central portion of the empire was directly administered by the king himself, whereas the outposts of the kingdom were governed by his sons and near relatives.² The Bamnera grant³ mentions mahārājaputra Kumārasīha who was enjoying the village of Koreṭa as his assignment. D.Sharma⁴ seems to be convincing when he suggests that he was another son of Ālhana. According to the Nadol plates dated A.D. 1161 king (rājakuḥ) Ālhanadeva and the crown-prince (kumāra) Kelhanadeva jointly granted a group of twelve villages to a junior member of the family rājaputra Kīrtipāla.⁵ We find that in the Cāhamāna kingdom of Nadol in the reign of Ālhana Māṇḍavyapura was under Kelhana's younger brother Gajasīha, but under Kelhana himself

1. E.I., XI p.34.

2. D.Sharma, Early Chauhān Dynasties, p.202.

3. E.I., XIII.208.

4. Loc. cit., p.136.

5. E.I., IX no.9 (B).

it was respectively in A.D. 1183 and 1192 under Kelhapa's son Siṃhavikrama and Soḍhaladeva.¹ This may indicate that the feudal assignments to tribesmen were not necessarily always hereditary and permanent. The overlord would appear to have an abiding title to these feudal assignments and could transfer parts of it to others. We have seen that Kīrtipāla had been assigned twelve villages by king Ālhapa and the heir-apparent Kelhapa and these were in the possession of Kīrtipāla's sons Abhayapāla and Lakhanapāla but it is to be noted that Sonāna, one of these twelve villages, was temporarily assigned to a certain thākura Anasīha.² It is to be noted that in the Cāhamāna records rājaputra is mostly used in the sense of a scion of a royal family, which is the literal and original meaning of the term, and not a military chief enjoying some land assignment, which meaning it came to acquire in the records of other contemporary dynasties. But it would appear that the term was not slow to get associated with some kind of land assignment even in the records of the Cāhamānas. In one of the inscriptions of this family³ we have a reference to

1. D.Sharma, Early Chauhān Dynasties, p.138.

2. E.I., XI p.48. See also D.Sharma, Loc. cit., p.142.

3. E.I., XIII no. 18 (B).

a sejā (allotment) of a rājaputra named Ajayadeva. In an inscription from Jalor dated A.D. 1181¹ Jojala, the maternal uncle of Samarasimha, the Cāhamāna ruler of Jalor, is described as rājyacintaka rājaputra Jojala, which may suggest that he had received some feudal assignment. Another grant of the family dated A.D. 1176² informs us that during the reign of Kelhana the two sons of Kīrtipāla, the rājaputra Lakhanapālha and the rājaputra Abhayapāla, were the estate-holders (bhoktr̥s)³ of Sinānava. In the same inscription Lakhanapālha and Abhayapāla along with the queen granted their share in the barley realised from the araghata of a village. This would suggest that the three enjoyed the village together. We have other records of the family to demonstrate clearly that the queens also received independent assignments of land. Thus, in one inscription dated A.D. 1143⁴ a village is said to have been

1. E.I., XI p.53.

2. E.I., XI no. 4 (XV).

3. Bhoktr̥ literally means one who enjoys and thus seems to have been used, like bhogin and bhogika of other records, in the sense of a man who enjoys a feudal assignment.

4. E.I., XI no.4 (V). Professor R.S.Sharma, J.E.S.H.O., IV.87 explains girās as being for food and clothing. But it is to be noted that in modern usage girās stands for the landed property of a ruling tribe - D.H.N.I., II.1110 f.n.5.

enjoyed by queen Śrī-Tihunaka as her girāsa (=grāsa). Another inscription dated A.D. 1179¹ refers to the bhukti (feudal assignment) of queen Jālhanadevī.

It appears that the later Cāhamānas of Bhṛgukaccha also made assignments to members of the royal family. We thus find that the port of Cambay was under the personal enjoyment of Sindhurāja, the younger brother of Siṃha, the Cāhamāna ruler of Broach.²

Though we do not have so many records testifying to the land apportionment among the royal kinsmen, we have some indications that they were by no means unknown under other dynasties also. Thus, the Modasa plate dated A.D. 1011³ speaks of a bhoktāra mahārājaputra Vatsarāja under king Bhoja of the Paramāra dynasty. It would appear from the title mahārājaputra that Vatsarāja was a son of king Bhoja, unknown from other sources. Bhoktāra may be a mistake for bhoktṛ and thus it would follow that this prince enjoyed Mohaḍavāsaka or a part of it as the estate under his possession.

Under the Candellas we find that some members of the

1. E.I., XI no. 4 (XVII).
2. Kīrtikaumudī, IV.75, 84-87.
3. E.I., XXXIII.196-98.

royal family were given the rulership over a district. Thus, Kanhapa or Kṛṇapa, the brother of king Dhāṅga, had in his charge a district near Jhansi and Dudhai and called himself a nṛpa. His successor¹ Devalabdhī continued to rule the district under his uncle Dhāṅga and his cousin Gaṇḍa.

The colophon of a manuscript dated A.D. 1150 informs us that during the reign of the Gāhaḍavāla king Govindacandra prince Vijayacandra enjoyed the possession of Baḍaharadeśa on the southern bank of the Yamunā.²

The practice in the clan monarchies in later mediaeval times in Rajasthan and the Rajput kingdoms of mediaeval Chhatisgarh indicate that the characteristic unit granted to a chief was a group of 84 villages. U.N.Ghoshal takes the³
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1. N.S.Bose, History of the Candellas, p.133.
2. Jaina Pustaka Prasasti Sangraha, p.106 - Śrīmad-Govindacandradevarāja Jānhavyā dakṣiṇe kūle śrīmad-Vijayacandradeva-Baḍaharadeśabhujamāne. It has been suggested by R.Niyogi, History of the Gāhaḍavāla Dynasty, p.117 that Adakkamalla who in the fragmentary stone inscription from Nagod dated A.D. 1237 (E.I., XXIII.186-89) is mentioned as belonging to the Gāhaḍavāla dynasty and ruled probably over the area between the Yamunā and the Sone belonged to a branch line of the main Gāhaḍavāla dynasty which was made by Govindacandra to rule as a feudatory of the imperial family in the Vindhyan region conquered from the Kalacuris.
3. J.A.S.B., 1919-20, p.197.
4. Baden-Powell, Land System, I.250f; The Indian Village Community, pp.196ff.
5. Hindu Revenue System, pp.241, 259.

references in the records of our period to the unit of 84 villages and its sub-divisions to indicate the survivals of chiefs' allotment in a system of clan monarchies. The practice of apportioning state territory into groups of 84 villages is ~~known~~¹ unknown to the literature~~m~~ on law and polity. Some references to this practice is, however, found in the works of our period.² The caurāsīā or holders of villages formed the basic unit in the division of empire among the feudal chiefs.~~ix~~ The caurāsīā or holders of 84 villages are mentioned as a well-known class of chiefs in the Vīśaladeva Rāso³ assigned to the latter part of the fourteenth century A.D.⁴ There is some epigraphic corroboration of the suggestion that the unit 84 represented the division which the chiefs used

1. Hindu Revenue System, p.241.

2. In the Aparājita-prochā (p.203; also pp.194, 196) the list of the grades of feudatories leaving besides the holders of 50, 20, 3, 2 and 1 villages the caturamśika at the bottom. Caturamśika has been corrected by V.S. Agrawal, Harṣacarita : eka samskṛtika adhyayana, p.220 as caturāsika or holder of 84 villages, who thus argues that the chiefs holding 84 villages formed the basic unit in the division of empire among the feudal chiefs. But we do not approve of the amendment. Caturamśika literally means one possessing one-fourth portion and this suits the context. The grade immediately preceding caturamśika in the list given in the text is laghu-sāmanta defined as a feudatory having 5,000 villages. The number of villages possessed by a caturamśika is 1,000 which is thus roughly one-fourth of that owned by a laghu-sāmanta.

3. pp. 68, 243.

4. Ibid., Introduction, p.5.

to receive.¹ In a Gurjara-Pratihāra record² we have one of the earliest references to the system of 84 villages. In it a chief is said to have acquired 84 villages by the might of his own arm, probably suggesting thereby that it was not because he belonged to the same tribe that he received it but in the sense that his overlord had to accept his claim in view of his military strength. The testimony of Kalavan plates of the Paramāras³ belonging to the second half of the eleventh century A.D. is more to the point. It speaks of a chief (sāmanta) of the Gaṅga family enjoying a district which was a feudal grant of 84 villages. An inscription from Rajasthan⁴ belonging to the twelfth century refers to Ratna-pura-caturāsika. It would appear that Ratnapura was a feudal estate of 84 villages which originally some king had apportioned to a chief of his tribe. In a record of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Kṛṣṇa II⁵ dated 910-11 A.D. from Gujarat a group of 84 villages appears

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1. D.C.Sircar, Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Mediaeval India, pp. 198-205.
 2. E.I., IX no. 1 (A).
 3. E.I., XIX no. 10 11.8-9 - caturāsīti-mānyaka-patta-Āudrahādī-viṣaye.
 4. P.Peterson, Collection of Sanskrit and Prakrit Inscriptions, p.206 - Ratnapuracaturāsikāyā mahārājabhūpālāsī-Rāyapāla-devānmaḥsanapṛptaśī-Pūnapākṣadevaḥ.
 5. E.I., I no. 8.

in the midst of other administrative divisions of larger and smaller number of villages which would suggest an attempt to incorporate the unit of clan monarchies into the existing territorial system. In the Set-Mahet grant of the Gāhāḍavāla king Govindacandra¹ we have a reference to a pattalā of 84 villages (caturāśīti). Likewise the Badera plates of Madana-pāladeva² a feudatory of the Gāhāḍavālas mention a caturāsikā pattalā. We have seen³ that pattalā came to be used in some parts of northern India as the term for a territorial division but that basically it meant the territory which the king gave to chiefs as their jāgīrs. It is quite likely that the pattalās of 84 villages in the above-mentioned Gāhāḍavāla records were granted to the other chiefs of the tribe by some early Gāhāḍavāla king.

Sometimes in order to suit the size of the state and possibly also the number of kinsmen claiming such estates the king often reduced the number of villages in them to 42. As the size of the states in our period was often limited we find that the village-groups given to kinsmen and other chiefs

1. E.I., XI pp. 20-26.

2. J.U.P.H.S., XIV.69-79.

3. See *infra* pp. 196-99.

under the clan monarchies generally consisted of 12 or its multiples. The unit of 42 villages is mentioned in a Paramāra inscription dated A.D. 1055¹ and two records of the Caulukyas of Gujarat dated respectively A.D. 1051² and 1175³. It is interesting to note that a Gāhaḍavāla grant dated A.D. 1133⁴ mentions a pattalāṃ of 42 villages (bayālīsī). In a grant dated A.D. 1091⁵ we find that the number of villages in the unit attached to Ānandapura under the Caulukya king Karna I was 126, which being a multiple of 42 suggests that originally the unit was granted to some chief belonging to the ruling tribe. The references to units of 12 villages or their multiples are many. Thus Kīrtipāla, a junior prince of the Cāhamāna family, is said to have been granted 12 villages by the Cāhamāna king Āhaṇadeva and the crown-prince Kelhaṇadeva.⁶ A unit of 12 villages is mentioned in a Cāhamāna inscription⁷ of the tenth century. An inscription in Gujarat dated A.D. 1192⁸

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1. E.I., III no.7.
 2. I.A., XII.196ff.
 3. I.A., XVIII.83.
 4. E.I., IV.111f.
 5. E.I., I no.36.
 6. E.I., IX no. 9 (B).
 7. E.I., II no.8.
 8. D.H.N.I., II.1201.

records the grant of 12 villages to a Guhila chief. In the inscriptions of the Paramāras we find references to groups of 48, 36 and 12 villages.¹ A unit of 12 villages is referred to in an inscription of the Candella king Paramardideva.² As we have seen elsewhere,³ there were also units of many other numbers of villages, which are not covered by the systems of 84 and 12 but which appear to have been fashioned after them by kings to suit their convenience.

In the Rajput type of monarchies organised on clan lines the king keeps the central, or the best, part of the kingdom to himself, distributing the outlying portions to the other chiefs of the clan. In the clan monarchies of the early mediaeval period the picture resembles that of later times in so far as in some records some specific parts of the kingdom are stated to have been under the direct enjoyment of the king, implying thereby that the other parts had been apportioned to others. Such portions under the personal enjoyment of the king are introduced as sva-bhoga in the records of the Candellas⁴

1. D.C.Ganguly, History of the Paramāra Dynasty, p.237.

2. E.I., IV no.20. Also see C.I.I., IV no.42.

3. See *infra* pp. 199f

4. Charkhari plate of Devavarmadeva dated A.D. 1051 - E.I., XX.127.

and the Cāhamānas¹ whereas the grants of the Caulukyās² and the Paramāras³ have sva-bhujyamāna⁴. In some of these records there are references to show that these areas under the possession of the kings were formed after the units granted to other chiefs of the tribe and thus suggesting that the apportionment was done at the time of the foundation of the clan monarchy. Thus, we find that it was a unit of 126 villages (multiple of 42) which is said in the Sunak grant⁵ to have been under the personal enjoyment of Karna I. Likewise in the Harsha stone inscription⁶ one of the possessions of king Siṃharāja is Tūna-kūpaka a group of 12 villages.

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1. Harsha stone inscription of Vighraharāja dated A.D. 973 - E.I., II.119f ll.33-40.
 2. Balera plates of Mūlarāja I dated A.D. 995 - E.I., X.78f; Sunak grant of Karna I dated A.D. 1091 - E.I., I no.36. It would appear that the Caulukya king Kumārapāla after defeating Arjorāja kept Nadol in the first instance under his direct control. This would follow from Ojha grant no. 1 (Silver Jubilee Volume of the A.B.O. R.I., pp.314ff) which mentions Nadol as the svabhujyamānamandala of Kumārapāla. See D.Sharma, Early Chauhan Dynasties, p.134.
 3. Grant of Siyaka II dated A.D. 949 - E.I., XIX no.39 (A).
 4. Professor R.S.Sharma, J.E.S.H.O., IV p. 91 suggests in connection with the reference in the Paramāra grant that the districts under the personal enjoyment of the king belonged to the personal estates which the king had received as crown-prince.
 5. Loc. cit.
 6. Loc. cit.

There are not many relevant references indicating the relationship between the king and the tribal chiefs enjoying the assignments in the clan monarchies. The practice prevailing in later mediaeval times was that the kinsmen receiving these assignments were practically independent rulers in their areas but owed only two obligations to the king, of contributing aids in times of war, and of paying him fees on succession to their estates.¹ The first obligation in any case is mentioned in the Agni Purāṇa.² It requires the relations receiving remuneration from the king to arm themselves with the complete suit of arms, keep in their service armed soldiers and supply the king with horses, elephants and armed men in times of emergency. For the obligation of the kinsmen to pay fee on inheriting his estate we have no evidence. In many of the records referring to this type of assignment to royal kinsmen we have some indication to their abiding right to their estates in the sense that they are found making grants of portions of these. It would appear that they were not required to secure the permission of the king before making the grant. In the Harsha stone inscription³ of the

1. Baden-Powell, The Indian Village Community, pp.196ff.

2. CCXXXIX.32.

3. E.I., II.119f.

Cāhamāna king Vighraharāja we find that whereas the duṣṣādhya officer had to seek the permission of the king (svāmyanumata) for making a grant out of the assignments enjoyed by him, the royal kinsmen had not to undergo any such formality. The Nadol plate of the Cāhamānas dated A.D. 1161¹ indicates that the fief of 12 villages was granted to prince Kīrttipāla by king Ālhaṇadeva and crown-prince Kelhaṇadeva with absolute rights and in perpetuity in the sense that in making a grant of a sum from each of these villages he enjoins his descendants to observe the terms of the grant made by him. We can get some idea of the conditions of the grant from the India Office plate of Vijayarājadeva² in which the grant is made to two members of the Palha tribe. The grant is said to be made in perpetuity (sadāthityā) as long as the moon, the sun and the stars endure and to be enjoyed by the sons, grandsons, great-grandsons and other such descendants of the donee. Such assignments appear to have been small administrative units in themselves and were not to be interfered with by any military officer (kenāpi balādhikṛtena na pari-

1. E.I., IX no. 9 (B).

2. E.I., III.313f.

panthanīyā). The donees had the right to enjoy the assignment and to transfer them to another person (sahastā-prahastena bhoktavyā).

In this connection it should briefly be considered whether these feudal assignments to royal kinsmen were administrative units or personal estates rewarded for administrative service in a wider territorial unit. Professor R.S.Sharma¹ favours the latter view. But, the difficulty is, however, that in Indian texts we do not have any direct evidence bearing on the question. We would support the former possibility on the ground that in all these records mentioning the apportionment to royal kinsmen the latter are simply said to be enjoying those estates. The records which often refer to the posts held by the donors, donees and other connected persons do not give any indication of the royal kinsmen being in charge of any bigger administrative units. So it would appear that the estates were given to the royal kinsmen to be ruled as administrative units.

We have no means of determining the areas which in the different clan monarchies of our period were apportioned to

1. J.E.S.H.O., IV.90.

the royal kinsmen. Generally the records do not indicate whether any given area was in the nature of a grant to a kinsman. We would have formed some idea if we had known all the different administrative units in these kingdoms. In any case, all attempts in this connection will have to be treated as tentative in the sense that we cannot say to have recovered all the records granting such estates. It would appear, however, that the region under the personal enjoyment of the king was relatively small in proportion to the total area of the kingdom as would follow from the fact that in our records very few regions are described as being under the personal possession (svabhujyamāna) of the king. We feel that apportionment to kinsmen had become quite common in our period. It appears that Sulaimān¹ refers to the fact that the monarchies of our period were established on clan lines when he observes that in the kingdoms of India the nobility is considered to form but one family in which alone power resides.

Here we may refer to assignments made to refugee princes.

1. Elliot and Dowson I.6.

In a royal family the succession being reserved for the eldest son the other ambitious princes would often have migrated to other courts to try their luck. As polygamy was the rule among kings this must have been the case more so in our period because the issues of the king's wives belonging to different tribes could not have been reconciled to the idea of losing~~g~~ succession to another member of the royal family. We learn from the Harṣacarita¹ that Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta, two such princes from Mālava, had sought refuge at the court of Sthāṇīśvara to be brought up as playmates of the sons of Prabhākaravardhana. Such princes were given lucrative assignments by the king to whose court they went. The Mānasollāsa² reveals how common this practice had become in our period when it advises a king to follow a definite policy of welcoming a ruling king who seeks protection, to give him a seat befitting his position, to please him with kind words, present him fine clothes, gold ornaments, jewels, horses and elephants, villages, cities or even small countries and make him stay in the best houses. The Tilakamañjarī³ speaks

14. (N.S.P., 1925) pp. 137ff.

2. II p.106.

3. p. 103 - Duṣṭadāyādasamavaśṭabdhārājyairāgatyāgatya
dīnmukhebhyaḥ nijapadārthibhiḥ pārthivakumāraib.

of princes who flocked from different directions for help from a powerful king in recovering their state which had been snatched from them by their wicked kinsmen. Another passage in the same text refers to a son of the king of Kalinga living¹ at the court of another king. We learn from the Prabandha-cintāmaṇi² that Jagaddeva was received by the Candella king Paramarddi who granted him the rulership of a deśa (region). Likewise, we know that Cāhaḍa, the son of Śiādharaāja, went to the Cāhamāna kingdom where he joined the Cāhamāna army in order to take vengeance upon the Caulukya king Kumārapāla.³ These refugee princes were for all practical purposes treated as kinsmen and assigned feudal estates of a similar nature. As marriage relations could easily be established with these princes, there was not much difficulty in such a practice. It is interesting to note that a Guhila chief, who took refuge in Surāṣṭra in about A.D. 1193 after being uprooted from his territory, is said to have been granted 12 villages which we have seen above was the unit of villages granted to royal kinsmen in monarchies founded on the lines of clans.

1. p.111.

2. p.115 l.4 - Śrī-Paramarddiprasādato deśādhipatyē sañjāte sati.

3. Ibid., p.79.

CHAPTER VI - ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS

The administrative divisions of the kingdoms in the early mediaeval period reflect the growing importance of feudal elements in the empire. We find that terms which seem to have feudal associations ~~were~~ became predominant among the designations of administrative units. The earlier terms were either replaced or adjusted to the feudal administrative set up. We may note the names appearing in the different areas. Thus in Assam the administrative units are bhukti, maṇḍala and viṣaya.¹ The inscriptions of Bengal usually mention bhukti, viṣaya, maṇḍala, khaṇḍala, vīthī² and sometimes others (vṛtti, oaturaka, aṣṭagaṇa, and vāṭikā). From the time of the Senas the territorial units pāṭaka, oaturaka and āvṛtti or vṛtti come into prominence.³ The Candella records refer to maṇḍala, viṣaya, pattalā and village groups.⁴ The Paramāra inscriptions have many units - maṇḍala, viṣaya, bhoga, pathaka, prati-jāgaraka and village groups.⁵ V.V.Mirashi⁶ has collected the

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1. P.C.Choudhury, History of Civilisation of Assam, p.320.
 2. R.C.Majumdar, History of Bengal, Vol. I p.23; B.Sen, Historical Aspects of Bengal Inscriptions, pp. 523-571.
 3. R.C.Majumdar, Loc. cit., p.280.
 4. Mitra, Early rulers of Khajuraho, pp.161ff.
 5. D.C.Ganguly, History of the Paramāra Dynasty, pp.235f.
 6. C.I.I., IV pp. cxxxiv-cxxxvi.

names of many administrative units in the inscriptions of this period - deśa, maṇḍala, viṣaya, pattalā, āhāra, bhoga, rāṣṭra, pathaka and village groups. The administrative units in the records of the Chaulukyas of Gujarat are maṇḍala, viṣaya, pathaka and village groups.¹ We find references to bhukti, maṇḍala, viṣaya and pathaka in the inscriptions of the Pratihāras.² The Gāhadavāla grants contain the administrative units viṣaya, pathaka and pattalā.³

It is to be noted that bhukti which so often appears in the inscriptions of the Gupta period as the designation of an administrative unit is not frequently found in the early mediaeval period. The reason probably lay in the fact that in this period we do not have many large kingdoms consisting of many provinces. Moreover, because a considerable part of the empire was under the possession of feudatory rulers the territories under the direct administration of the central authority would have been too much reduced to admit big administrative divisions such as provinces. Bhuktis are mentioned in the inscriptions from Bengal because this part of

1. A.K.Majumdar, Chaulukyas of Gujarat, p.208.

2. B.N.Puri, History of the Gurjara-Pratihāras, pp.107-9. Cf. Bengal Asiatic Society Plate (J.B.R.A.S., XXI.405ff) where the units in a descending order are bhukti, viṣaya, pathaka and grāma.

3. R.Niyogi, History of the Gāhadavāla Dynasty, p.127.

northern India witnessed the big empires of the Pālas and the Senas. The appearance of bhuktis in Assam¹ has to be explained as due to its long association with the Pālas. Bhuktis are found in the Pratihāra records also but not many examples can be quoted.² It is significant that there is no reference to bhuktis in the smaller kingdoms such as those of the Paramāras, Gāhaḍavālas, Candellas and Caulukyas. In some cases it appears that bhukti was not used in its strictly technical sense of a province.³ Thus the Irda inscription mentions Daṇḍabhukti as a mandala of the Vardhamāna-bhukti.⁴ It may also be noted here that in the Raṣṭrakūṭa empire bhuktis appear as subdivisions of a viṣaya and consist of 50 to 70 villages.⁵ We find that bhukti often denoted in this period a feudal assignment.⁶ This was obviously a literal use of the word which means enjoyment.

1. E.I., II.353.

2. B.N.Puri, Op. cit., p. 108.

3. E.G., Tirabhukti used as the name of a town. Cf. also Jejakabhukti of the Candellas.

4. In the Rāmacarita (commentary on II.5-6) Daṇḍabhukti is said to have been the principality of a semi-independent feudatory of king Rāmapāla. The evidence of the Irda inscription has been tried to be explained by the suggestion that there were two groups of bhuktis - major and minor - of which the minor were at times equated with mandalas. R.C.Majumdar, History of Bengal, I p.23.

5. Altekar, Raṣṭrakūṭas and their times, p. 138. Cf. also Yazdani, Early History of the Deccan, I p.303.

6. Cf. Upamitibhavaprapaṇcākathā, p. 484.

A bhukti or assignment by to a queen is referred to in the Sanderav inscription of the Cāhamānas of Nadol dated 1179 A.D.¹ Another inscription of the same family mentions a bhukti held as an assignment by Kaṭukarāja.²

It must be noted that the term maṇḍala occurs frequently in the records of the period. The term maṇḍala is generally interpreted as an administrative division of a kingdom such as a province. This has often led scholars to make strange and inconsistent statements regarding maṇḍala, especially with reference to its relation with viṣaya.³ Generally viṣaya appears as part of a maṇḍala. This is clear in the Barah plates of the Pratihāra king Bhoja⁴ and the Khalimpur plates of Dharmapāla.⁵ But on the other hand in some records like the Bangarh inscription of Mahīpāla I⁶ a viṣaya is represented as a greater unit than a maṇḍala. It has further been noted that viṣaya and maṇḍala are sometimes used as synonyms.⁷ Thus Khadi which appears as a viṣaya in the Barrackpur grant of Vijayasena is

1. D.H.N.I., II.1120.

2. E.I., XI.30ff. In the Kīrti-ikānamudī, IV.75, 84-87 Cambay is said to have been in the bhukti of Sindhurāja the younger brother of Simha, the Cāhamāna ruler of Broach.

3. E.I., XVII.316; XV.295. Cf. B.C.Sen, Op. cit., pp.562-63.

4. E.I., XIX p.15. At least in the Pratihāra inscriptions the order is almost always bhukti - maṇḍala - viṣaya. Puri, Op. cit., pp.106ff.

5. E.I., IV.243ff.

6. E.I., XIV.324ff. Amgachhi grant of Vigrahapāla III - E.I., XV.293ff; Kameuli inscription of Vaidyadeva - E.I., II.350ff; Manahali grant of Vigrahapāla III - Gaudalekhamālā, pp.147ff;

mentioned as a mandala in the Sundarban grant of Lakṣmanasena.¹ A recent work² supports the equation of mandala with viṣaya on the basis of the expression Navarāṣṭramandalaviṣaya occurring in the Charkhari plate of Devavarman dated 1050 A.D.³ Of these different quotations that in which the same name is used for a mandala and a viṣaya alike can possibly be explained by assuming that a bigger administrative unit and one of its subdivisions had the same name.

We are of the opinion that all this conflicting evidence can be explained⁴ if we take mandala to refer primarily to the territory under a big feudatory or else to a territory of a circle of feudatories who recognised one among themselves as superior but paid allegiance to an overlord. Mandala, we know, originally denoted in the Arthasāstra⁵ and following it in other

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- Dhulia and Edilpur copper plates of Śrīcandra - I.B., III pp. 165-67. See also D.C.Ganguly, Op. cit., p.235 f.n.2.
7. R.C.Majumdar, History of Bengal, I p.23. In the Barreackpur grant of Vijayasena (I.B., III.61ff) Khadi is mentioned as a viṣaya but in the Sundarban plate of Lakṣmanasena (ibid., pp.169ff) the same is referred to as a mandala.
 8. E.I., XV.278ff.
 1. I.B., III.169-72. Cf. however Sen, Op. cit., pp.96ff who gives another explanation. It is possible that Khadimandala comprised Khadiṣaya and other viṣayas.
 2. Mitra, Early rulers of Khajuraho, p.163.
 4. Cf. B.C.Sen, Op. cit., p.564 for the suggestion that such exchanges and adjustments were required due to frequent conquests of territories in the period.
 3. E.I., XX.125-28. For our alternative suggestion see infra p.186.
 5. VI.1,2.

¹ legal texts a diplomatic circle of twelve neighbouring kings, some friendly and others unfriendly, in relation to a king desirous of conquest (vijigīṣu). It is quite likely that later on with the feudatory system becoming prevalent and the theory of maṇḍala being interpreted in terms of relations with one's feudatories² the term maṇḍala came to be used for a circle of feudatories headed by a chief and paying allegiance to an overlord. From this it is easy to understand that the term could be used for the territory under the possession of a feudatory. Maṇḍala, in our period, is used in some cases for some kind of administrative division, but its more common use was in feudalistic association. The use of the titles maṇḍalā-dhipati, maṇḍaleśvara and māṇḍalika would also confirm this meaning of maṇḍala. There are also some other considerations which suggest that maṇḍala often did not stand for an ordinary administrative division of the empire. Thus Daṇḍabhukti has been mentioned in the Irda copper plate³ of the reign of the Kāmboja king Nayapāladeva as a maṇḍala of the Vardhamāna-bhukti.

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1. Manu, VII.155-57; Kāmandaka, VIII, XII, XIII; Mbh., XIII.59. 70-71; Viṣṇudharmottara, II.1453.11-16; Agni Purāṇa, CCXL. 4-5; CCXXIII.21-22; Mit. on Yāj., I.345; Nītivākyaṃṛta, pp. 318f.
 2. Cf. Medhātithi on Manu VII.154.
 3. E.I., XXII pp. 50-59.

There are references to Uttara-Rāḍhā-maṇḍala and Kāmarūpa-maṇḍala respectively in the Naihati copper plate of Vallālasena¹ and the Kamauli inscription of Vaidyadeva.² We likewise see that Naddula which was really a maṇḍala within the Caulukya empire³ was being ruled by feudatories with the title of mahā-rājādhirāja with many tributaries and chiefs under them.⁴ The expressions svamaṇḍala and maṇḍalāntara occurring in the Rāja-taraṅgiṇī⁵ also suggest that in Kashmir, while the overlord had direct administrative control over his own maṇḍala, his tributaries governed other maṇḍalas.⁶ Dr. Beni Prasad has pointed out that in the Bhavisayattakahā maṇḍala is used in the sense of "a circle of suzerainty comprising an overlord and his vassals". Our interpretation of maṇḍala may explain the above-mentioned difficulties concerning the relation between maṇḍala and viṣaya. Viṣaya, which generally stands for a division like the modern district, was often part of a territory ruled by a feudatory. In some cases, however, where the area of a feuda-

1. E.I., XIV.156-63.

2. E.I., II.350ff.

3. D.H.N.I., II.1118.

4. E.I., XI.36f. Towards the close of the eleventh century the Fuṇḍarika-maṇḍala in Pala empire was being ruled by the feudatory chief Bhima as his own possession and not by any state officer - J.A.S. (L), 1951, p.121.

5. VIII.212, 8.

6. State in Ancient India, p.462.

tory chief was small, it could form part of a visaya.¹ We may suggest that in cases where the same name is applied both for a visaya and a maṇḍala in two records belonging to two different dates the later in date indicates the transformation of one type of territory into the one mentioned in it. Likewise, we would interpret the enigmatic expression Navarāṣṭramāṇḍalaviṣaya to suggest that the earlier territory of a feudatory ruler had only recently been converted into a regular administrative division of the empire.

In the light of the interpretation of maṇḍala suggested by us we may take the frequent occurrence of this term in the records of the early mediaeval period to suggest that the area of the territories ruled by feudal chiefs and feudatories constituted a considerable part of the empire. This reflects a situation in which feudal elements were gaining predominance in the political set up.

The lexicon known as Vaijayantī explains maṇḍala as the collection of villages.² At another place it describes rāṣṭra, visaya and upavartana as consisting of more than a hundred

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1. E.g., Kamauli inscription of Vaidyadeva - E.I., II.350ff; Dhulia and Edilpur copper plates of Sricandra, - I.B., III pp.165-67. See also D.C.Ganguly, Op. cit., p.235 f.n.2.
 2. p. 262 l.130 - trilingam maṇḍalam vṛnde grāmaugheprati-bimbayoh.

villages and a maṇḍala as containing more than a hundred rāṣṭra or viṣaya.¹ We have no other evidence to check these definitions. It however does not seem very likely that any great attention was paid on these divisions having precisely the number of villages laid down here.

Another term which is often equated with maṇḍala is deśa. Deśa originally meaning a region may have denoted a territorial division in the Gupta period.² In early mediaeval times deśa is often used to indicate the largest territorial unit. In the inscriptions of this period maṇḍala is sometimes used in place of deśa.³ Maṇḍala and deśa were often used as synonyms though maṇḍala appears to have been more frequently used.⁴ In the Prabandhaśintāmaṇi Mālava is mentioned first as maṇḍala and then in the line just following it is referred to as deśa.⁵ The testimony of the Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra of Bhoja⁶ is more to the

1. p.108 ll.96-7.

2. A.K.Majumdar, Chaulukyas of Gujarat, p.208.

3. Mirashi, C.I.I., IV pp. cxxxv-cxxxvi.

4. A.K.Majumdar, Loc. cit. Cf. B.C.Sen, Op. cit., p.563.

5. p.11 ll.22f. It may be controverted that deśa in this and other references has been used as a general term for region. It is however to be emphasised that significantly enough we find deśa being thus substituted only for maṇḍala and no other administrative division. The Sahyādrīkhaṇḍa referred to above clearly shows that deśa was sometimes used as a technical term for a distinct administrative unit.

6. I pp.86f v.7-Nagaram varjayitvānyat sarvam janapadaḥ smṛtaḥ.
Nagareṇa samam kṛtsnam rāṣṭram deśo'tha maṇḍalam.

point. Here the entire territory including the city is termed both as deśa and mandala. We have pointed out elsewhere¹ that in some documents in the Lekhapaddhati deśa is used in the sense of the territory under the feudal chief with the designation of rāṇaka. This would suggest that deśa was synonymous with mandala irrespective of its use in a general or restricted sense and would lend support to our suggestion that mandala had often a feudal association. It is however to be noted that in some cases a difference was made between deśa and mandala. Thus according to the Sahyādrīkhanda a deśa is made up of a hundred villages and the mandala of four deśas.²

We have seen that viṣaya generally denoted a division lower than mandala. The Abhidhānaratnamālā describes it as containing a number of villages.³ The Kṛtyakalpataru also explains it as a collection of villages.⁴ The Vaijayantī defines it as consisting of more than a hundred villages.⁵ It has been suggested in a recent study⁶ that a viṣaya conveyed the idea of a modern tahsīl or a smaller district on the ground that in a

1. See *infra* p.218.

2. Kane, History of Dharmasāstra, III.438 f.n.180.

3. v.284 - Nivṛjjanapado deśa upavartanamisyate.
Jano lokah prajā prokṭā viṣayo grāmasamkhyayā.

4. Dāna, p.66.

5. p.108 ll.96f.

6. Puri, *Op. cit.*, p.107.

descending list of administrative divisions viṣaya immediately precedes the villages. We agree with the view of Dr. Altekar¹ that generalisation about the size of the administrative divisions is not safe as it varied in different regions and in different centuries. But we feel that in most cases viṣaya corresponded rather to a district than to a tahsīl. There were also some other divisions between a viṣaya and a village. But they were not universally used and that is why we find that in some cases these relatively not very common designations are not mentioned. Even the Bengal Asiatic Society plate of Pratihāra king Vināyakapāladeva² mentions a pathaka after a viṣaya. In the Chaulukya inscriptions also we find below viṣayas pathakas and unions³ of villages. A viṣaya had smaller subdivisions which were called ṣhāras in Central India and Gujarat and bhogas in Mahārāṣṭra.⁴ In the inscriptions of the Paramāras we have pathakas and pratiṣṭhāgarāṇakas besides the bhogas.⁵ The Gāhaḍavāla records place pathakas and pattalās between viṣaya and grāma.⁶

1. State and Government in Ancient India, pp.156f.

2. I.A., XV.138.

3. A.K.Majumdar, Chaulukyas of Gujarat, p.208.

4. Mirashi, C.I.I., IV pp. cxxxiv-cxxxv.

5. D.C.Ganguly, Op. cit., pp. 235f.

6. R.Niyogi, History of the Gāhaḍavāla Dynasty, p.128.

We find that in some empires there are not many references to viṣayas, which may be due to the fact that with the increasing number of feudal chiefs the number of districts under the direct administration of the central authority was considerably reduced. Prof. Mirashi¹ notices that in the inscriptions dated in the Kalacuri era viṣaya is rarely mentioned in the early mediaeval period. The Gāhaḍavāla records mention only one viṣaya by name, though it is likely that two other names were also viṣayas.² In Paramāra records the number of viṣayas mentioned is limited to two.³ It has been rightly pointed out that the term viṣaya is less frequently used in the Sena inscriptions than in those of the Pālas.⁴ The decline in the frequency of the use of viṣayas in the administrative set up of the period explains the rather loose use of viṣaya in some records of the period. We have some instances of viṣaya being used in the sense of a province or country. Thus the Anjaneri plates⁵ give the expression Puri-Koṅkana-viṣaya for the province of Koṅkana. Likewise the Kanheri plate⁶ has the expression

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1. C.I.I., IV p. cxxxv.
 2. R.Niyogi, Op. cit., p.128.
 3. D.C.Ganguly, Op. cit., p.236.
 4. E.C.Sen, Op. cit., p.564.
 5. C.I.I., IV no. 31 l.23.
 6. Ibid., p.31 l.2.

Sindhuviṣaya for the province of Sindh. The colophon of a manuscript of the Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā dated in the fifteenth regnal year of Rāmapāla calls Magadha a viṣaya.¹ In the Rāṣṭrakūṭa empire viṣaya was a ~~sub~~ division higher than the bhuktis and comprised 1,000 to 4,000 villages.² In the Brhatkathākosa,³ viṣaya is used for the realm of a king who appears to have had feudatories under him.⁴ There are some other instances of such a use of the term viṣaya. Thus an inscription belonging to the reign of the Paramāra king Bhoja⁵ employs viṣaya alike for the territory of a feudatory consisting of 1,500 villages and a holding of 84 villages contained therein.

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1. R.D.Banerji, Pālas of Bengal, p.93. Catalogue of Sanskrit MSS in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, Vol. II p.250 no.1428. It is however to be noted that the text does not make it clear that this viṣaya comprised the whole or even a large part of Magadha.
 2. Rāṣṭrakūṭas and their Times, p.138. Though the Rāṣṭrakūṭa empire was in the Deccan, it included Gujarat and neighbouring areas; hence we use the Rāṣṭrakūṭa inscriptions, but not those of other kingdoms in the Deccan.
 3. p.59.
 4. As an alternative to our interpretation of the expression Navarāṣṭramandalaviṣaya occurring in the Charkhari plate of Candella king Devavarmadeva (E.I., XX.127) we may suggest that viṣaya appears to have been used in the rather loose sense of a territory in general.
 5. E.I., XIX No. 10 ll.8-9. R.D.Banerji (ibid., p.74) translates it once as 'province' and in another context leaves it as it is. In his introduction (ibid., p.71) he however renders the second reference as 'district'.

Another term which indicates the increasingly feudal composition of the kingdoms is bhoga¹. Bhoga literally meaning enjoyment or possession has often been used in the sense of a feudal assignment or jāgīr². The use of the term also for a territorial unit of the empire goes a long way to suggest the preponderance of feudal assignments in the kingdoms of the period. It is significant that the lexicon Vaijayanti³ also employs the term in the sense of a kingdom (bhogo rājye). In some of the plates of the Kalachuris, Caulukyas, Eastern Gangas, Paramāras and the Pāṇḍuvamśis⁴ the village granted is said to have been situated in a territorial unit denoted by bhoga.⁵ Mirashi notices its frequent use in Mahārāṣṭra. The position of bhoga vis-a-vis mandala is clear from many records which mention a bhoga as a division of a mandala⁶. D.C.Ganguly⁷ is

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1. Bhoga already occurs in Gupta inscriptions where the feudal association is not so clear.
 2. In the records of our period we do not find any difference between bhoga and bhukti so far as their feudal association is concerned. It would however appear that bhukti sometimes stood for a small province whereas bhoga does not seem to have any such usage in our period, excepting of course the Paramāra records.
 3. p.217 l.87.
 4. E.I., XXXIII.169f.
 5. C.I.I., IV p. cxxxiv.
 6. E.I., XXIII.108.
 7. History of the Paramāra Dynasty, pp. 235f.

doubtful about the relation between bhoga and viṣaya. But some inscriptions make it quite clear that bhoga in such cases was a subdivision of a viṣaya.¹ The designation bhogika is also found in inscriptions of earlier dynasties such as the Uccakalpas, Parivrājakas and Śailodbhavas. Fleet² took bhogika as the technical term to indicate an official connected with a bhoga, which he explained as a territorial term of about the same purport as the bhukti of other inscriptions. But we have shown elsewhere³ that bhogika generally stood for a jāgīrdār or one possessing a fief. For an officer in charge of the territorial unit bhoga of our period the term used is bhogapati. This receives support from the fact that in some inscriptions bhogapati is used in association with nṛpati and viṣayapati,⁴ which suggests that on the analogy of viṣayapati a bhogapati was in charge of a bhoga.

Pathaka is another territorial unit which is often found in the records of the period. It is however to be noted that it did not occur in all areas. That is why Prof. Mirashi could⁵

1. E.I., VI.298; XIX.61.

2. C.I.I., IVI p. 100 f.n.2.

3. See *infra* pp. 226-228.

4. E.I., IV.249; XII.34; XXIII.159; XXVII.40.

5. C.I.I., IV p. cxxxv.

notice only very few pathakas. In the Gāhādavāla records also pathakas are only rarely noticed.¹ Pathakas are mentioned in the Paramāra² and Pratihāra³ inscriptions also. In the inscriptions of the Caulukyas of Gujarat we find references to many pathakas.⁴ The reason is probably to be sought in the fact that pathaka as an administrative unit seems to have been in use from earlier times in Gujarat, being mentioned in the records of the Maitraka dynasty.⁵ The editor of the Mala (Dungarpur, Rajasthan)⁶ inscription dated 1287 A.D. translates pathaka as a district. In the Gāhādavāla records however pathaka appears as a division lower than the viṣaya but higher than the pattalā.⁷ The inscriptions of the Caulukyas of Gujarat likewise mention pathakas between viṣayas and unions of villages.⁸ Mirashi⁹ has also noticed that in Gujarat and Khandesh viṣayas were subordinate to śhāras and themselves contained pathakas. In Paramara inscriptions pathakas appear as subdivisions of bhogas.¹⁰ The

1. R.Niyogi, Op. cit., p.139.

2. D.C.Ganguly, Op. cit., pp.235f.

3. B.N.Puri, Op. cit., p.108.

4. A.K.Majumdar, Op. cit., p.210.

5. K.J.Virji, Ancient History of Saurāshtra, p.236.

6. E.I., XXII.194, 1.10 refers to Katīja-pathaka which R.R.Halder, & the editor of the inscription mentions (ibid., p.192) as district Katīja.

7. R.Niyogi, Op. cit., pp.127, 139.

8. A.K.Majumdar, Op. cit., p.208.

9. C.I.I., IV p. cxxxv.

10. D.C.Ganguly, Op. cit., pp. 235f.

inscriptions of the Pratihāras also mention a pathaka as a unit of the visaya.¹ From all this it becomes clear that the pathaka was a subdivision of a district and not as is suggested by B.N.Puri² the district itself for which the term in common use was visaya. We feel that pathaka was one of the terms used for groups of villages in which a district was divided in this period. This would explain the omission of the term pathaka in some of the records.³ In the Caulukya records we have references to pathakas which contained 64,⁴ 40⁵ or 36⁶ villages. The colophon of a Jain manuscript mentions a pathaka of 44⁷ villages. These references indicate that the number of villages forming a pathaka was not rigidly fixed but we can

1. B.N.Puri, Op. cit., p.108.

2. Ibid.

3. The term pathaka is not noticed by any lexicon of the ancient times. Monier-Williams refers to its use only as meaning "knowing the way, a guide" and apparently follows Bohtlingk and Roth who explain it as pathi kusalah. However in the edition for the year 1899 he adds the meaning "a district, canton". But unfortunately he does not quote any reference and merely refers to lexicons. We do not know the original meaning of the term but wonder if it was used for groups of villages situated on the same road.

4. I.A., XVIII.344, 347 - catusasthi-pathaka.

5. I.A., VI.200 - cālīsā-pathaka.

6. J.B.B.R.A.B., XXVI.257 - ṣaṭtriṃśat-pathaka.

7. Jaina Pustaka Prastuti Saṅgraha, p. 109 - catuscatvāriṃśat.

form some idea of the pathaka from these numbers. The number of villages in a pathaka in the Gāhaḍavāla kingdom noticed below would suggest that in some areas the pathakas included quite a large number of villages. The colophon of another manuscript dated 1170 A.D.¹ refers to the rule of a sāmanta-mantrin² over a pathaka. This may be taken to suggest that sometimes pathakas had associations with the sāmanta system and were not to be treated as regular administrative divisions of an empire under state officers.

Prof. ~~M. K. Mirashi~~ Mirashi has noticed that in the northern part of the regions in which inscriptions dated in the Kalacuri era are found pattalā was very common and was used over a wide area.³ We have many references to this territorial unit in the records of the Candellas.⁴ The pattalās seem to have been very common in use in the Gāhaḍavāla kingdom. In their land-grants we find references to some sixty pattalās.⁵ It is but reasonable

1. Catalogue of Manuscripts at Pattan, I p.105 - sāmanta-mantrinī Balādraka-pathakam paripanthayattityevam kile pravarttamāne.

2. For the meaning of the expression see infra pp. 289-90.

3. C.I.I., IV pp. cxxxv-cxxxvi.

4. Mitra, Early rulers of Khajuraho, pp.161f.

5. R.Niyogi, History of the Gāhaḍavāla Dynasty, pp. 128, 138.

to suggest that the Gāhaḍavālas borrowed the pattalā system from the Kalacuris in whose records it appears earlier.¹ This is certainly understandable as it is known that the Gāhaḍavālas took over many institutions from the Kalacuris.² There are indications that in some cases the pattalās consisted of a family large number of villages. The Set-Mahet grant of Govindacandra³ mentions a pattalā of 84 villages (caturāśīti). A caturāśīkā pattalā is mentioned in the Badera plate of Madanapāladeva.⁴ The Kamauli grant dated 1120 A.D.⁵ gives the name of a pattalā as Neulasatāvisikā which may suggest that it originally consisted of 120 villages. These records are supported by an inscription of 1092 A.D. which refers to the grant of a pattalā with the exclusion of 36 villages already donated.⁶ Another inscription of 1098 A.D. records the grant of 30 villages in a certain pattalā.⁷ But certain other records which mention a smaller number of villages in a pattalā would indicate

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1. E.I., XI.139ff - Gaharwa grant of Kalacuri Karnaḍadeva dated 1047 A.D.
 2. Govindacandra adopted the seated goddess type for his coins and assumed the title aśvapati-gaṇapati-narapati-rājatraya-dhipati. See R.Niyogi, Op. cit., pp. 74f.
 3. E.I., XI pp.20-26.
 4. J.U.P.H.S., XIV.75. As suggested by R.Niyogi, Op. cit., p.138 p.n.3 vaturāśīkā is a scribe's mistake for caturāśīkā.
 5. E.I., IV.109-11.
 6. E.I., XIV.195.
 7. Ibid., p.198.

that there was a wide range for the numbers of villages forming a pattalā. Thus the Kamauli plate of 1132 A.D. mentions a pattalā of 42 villages (bayālisī)¹. It is very difficult to generalise about the size of a pattalā. It has however been rightly pointed out by R.Niyogi² on the basis of the boundaries of Kathehali pattalā as given in a land-grant that it must have been approximately the same size as the modern paraganā of Katchir. It is very difficult to give a satisfactory explanation of the origin of the term pattalā in the sense of a territorial unit. Jonarāja uses it in connection with the assignments³ of land to thakkura chiefs. It is significant that the Lekhapaddhati⁴ uses the term for a charter bestowing fief. We find it associated with assignments whether made to a rānaka and consisting of a deśa or to a rājaputra and concerning a village. Thus it is clear that a pattalā was not a regular territorial unit of kingdoms. It was the term for the territory which the king gave to chiefs as their fiefs or jāgīrs. It usually consisted of several villages.⁵ The pattalā system is a very clear indication of the breaking up of the

1. Ibid., IV.111f.

2. History of the Gahadavala Dynasty, p.130.

3. Rājataranginī (N.S.P., 1892), p.116.

4. p.7.

5. Pattalā and pathaka seem to have a somewhat similar meaning.

centrally controlled administrative machinery and of the virtual partitioning of the kingdom into a number of big and small feudal assignments.

In some of the inscriptions of the Paramāras¹ and the Cāhamānas pratijāgaranaka, from which modern paraganā is derived, has been used as a term for a territorial unit. D.C.Ganguly² suggests that pratijāgaranaka was a subdivision of a pathaka. We however are of the opinion that it was also one of the several terms for groups of villages, though the number of villages forming it was smaller. This would account for its absence in the records of other areas. Thus an inscription of the Paramāras dated A.D. 1273 mentions a pratijāgaranaka of 87 villages (saptāśīti).⁴ Another Paramāra record of A.D. 1133 mentions a pratijāgaranaka as a division of a mandala.⁵

We find that sometimes these terms for village groups are not mentioned and the village granted is described as situated in a group of villages. In some cases the number of villages in such groups was not very large and that is why they were sometimes mentioned as divisions of one of the terms for village

1. D.C.Ganguly, History of the Paramāra Dynasty, pp.235f.

2. D.Sharma, Early Chauhan Dynasties, p.202.

3. Loc. cit., pp.235f.

4. E.I., XXXII.140.

5. I.A., XIX.351-53.

groups discussed above. We have elsewhere referred to caturāsikā¹ or a group of 84 villages. Groups of villages are mentioned in the inscriptions of the Caulukyas of Gujarat also.² In the inscriptions of the Paramāras we have references to groups of 64, 48, 42, 36, 17, 16 and 12 villages.³ An inscription of the Candella king Paramardideva mentions village groups comprising of 5, 12 and 18 villages.⁴ Groups of 12 villages seem to have been common being found elsewhere also.⁵ It would appear that some form of village-grouping was resorted to in Bengal also. In the Khalimpur inscription⁶ we have a reference to an officer called daśagrāmika who was obviously in charge of an administrative unit consisting of ten villages. It may be pointed out that though village-groups do not appear in the inscriptions of the Kuṣāṇa and Gupta periods they have been mentioned in the scheme of administrative units provided for in the Mahābhārata,⁷ the Arthasāstra⁸ and some Smṛti texts.

1. See supra pp. 166-71.

2. A.K. Majumdar, Op. cit., p. 208.

3. D.C. Ganguly, Op. cit., p. 237. It is not clear as to what determined the size of these groups : a geographically well-defined unit or lying on the same river or road.

4. E.I., IV no. 20.

5. C.I.I., IV no. 42.

6. R.I., IV. 243ff.

7. XII. 87.6-8.

8. V.3.

9. B.g., Manu VII. 118-19.

In the inscriptions of Bengal, especially those of the Senas, we find terms for several other administrative units which do not occur in the records of other parts of northern India. These are vīthī, caturaka, vāṭikā or khāṭikā, vr̥tti or āvr̥tti and bhāga. Of these vīthī is the most important and is found even in some of the earlier inscriptions. From the Naihati copper plate of Vallālasena¹ we learn that a vīthī was a subdivision under a maṇḍala, which again is comprised in a bhukti. The Śaktipur grant of Lakṣmaṇasena² mentions the order of these terms as bhukti, vīthī and maṇḍala and if we take these as being in a descending scale in regard to their jurisdiction, it would follow that sometimes vīthī included a maṇḍala as its subdivision. If our interpretation of maṇḍala as the territory under the possession of a feudatory is accepted the apparent contradiction in the two records mentioned can be reconciled by suggesting that in the case of a bigger feudatory the territory under him included one or more vīthīs, while in the case of a smaller feudatory his territory formed a part of the administrative division vīthī. This is clear from the Nalanda copper plates of Dharmapāla³ and Devapāla⁴ that viṣaya

1. E.I., XIV.156-63.

2. E.I., XXI.211-19.

3. E.I., XXIII.290ff.

4. E.I., XVII.310ff.

was a bigger area than a vīthī. In the Śaktipur grant of Lakṣmaṇasena¹ a caturaka is placed under a vīthī and appears to have included a number of pāṭakas. In the Sāhitya Pariṣat grant of Viśvarūpasena² the administrative divisions in a descending order are vṛtti, caturaka and pāṭakas. The Govindapur copper plate of Lakṣmaṇasena³ mentions a certain caturaka as situated in the Pasācīma-khātīkā of the Vardhamāna-bhukti, thus making a khatika an administrative unit larger than a khātīkā an administrative unit larger than a caturaka. Thus we find that in three different inscriptions there are mentioned three different terms representing administrative units larger than a caturaka. These are vīthī, vṛtti and khātīkā. Of these vithi was smaller than a viṣaya. About vṛtti and khātīkā we are sure only of the fact that they were included in a bhukti⁴. But beyond this we do not know anything about the terms, neither their precise significance nor the relations between these three : whether these are three different terms for the same unit or they represent three slightly different grades of units. Most likely they represented different units of village groups like pattalā, pathaka and pratiṣṭhāgaraka of other areas.

1. E.I., XXI.211-19.

2. I.B., III.143ff.

3. Ibid., pp.92-98.

4. The relationship between bhukti and vṛtti is known from the Madhainagar grant of Lakṣmaṇasena-J.A.S.B., 1909, pp.467ff.

Two other terms used in some of the Bengal records of the early mediaeval period are khaṇḍala and aṣṭagaḥa¹. These terms too do not occur in other parts of northern India and their precise meaning is not known. Of these aṣṭagaḥa may refer to a group of smaller administrative units, probably villages. In the Nalanda grant of Dharmapāla² the form grāmaka is used along with grāma and was used for a smaller village possibly a small group of families like the puravā of modern usage. The Nalanda grant of Devapāla³ speaks of a number of nayas in the Rājagṛhaviṣaya. We have no evidence to suggest the possible relation between naya and other terms standing for the subdivisions of a viṣaya. In the Madanapada⁴ and Sāhitya Pariṣat⁵ grants of Viśvarūpasena and the Edilpur grant of Keśavasena⁶ bhāga is attached to the name of Vikramapura which is placed in Vaṅga. If it is to be taken as a term signifying some particular administrative unit we may explain it as something resembling modern Division or Commissioner.

It has been suggested by S.K.Mitra⁷ that the expressions

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1. B.C.Sen, Op. cit., p.566.
 2. E.I., XXIII.290ff.
 3. E.I., XVII.340ff.
 4. I.B., III.132ff.
 5. Ibid., pp.140ff.
 6. J.A.S.B., VII.43-46.
 7. Early Rulers of Khajuraho, p.162.

avasthā and pratibaddham are used in the Candella records as administrative units signifying subdivisions. Pratibaddham literally means 'attached to' and is often used to refer to a village attached to a district. It thus appears that the villages described in this manner formed a part of that district.¹ We do not see any grounds for regarding pratibaddham as a term standing for a subdivision. The ~~the~~ other term avasthā is found only in one record, the Nanyaura plate of Devavarman² dated A.D. 1049. We wonder if there has been a mistake on the part of the scribe. As we find in other records it was intended to convey that the village was situated in Rājapura and the expression originally might have been Rājapura-avasthāite or sthite.

The above survey indicates that the terminology for the administrative divisions in our period emphasise the predominantly feudal character and composition of the empires. Thus maṇḍala, pattalā, bhoga and bhukti which have feudal associations came in for a common use. Viṣaya which denoted a district in earlier periods now sometimes had a loose use. It appears that with a major part of any kingdom in the possession of feudatories the area under the direct rule of the emperor had

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1. Nanyaura plates A of Dhaṅga dated A.D. 997 - I.A., XVI.201-4-Usaravāha-pratibaddham Yullīnāmadheyagrāma.
 2. I.A., XVI.201f - Rājapurāṇ-avasthāyām Rāmaśau-samvaddham Kāṭhaṅgrāme.

not much scope for terms which earlier stood for big provinces. Further we find that in place of viṣayas smaller units such as pratijāgaraka, pathaka and pattalā are used more frequently. It may be suggested that the practice of the governorships becoming often hereditary which led to the process of the conversion of administrative units ^{into} fiefs was to some extent responsible for this markedly feudal character of the administrative divisions in the period.

CHAPTER VII - GRADES OF FEUDATORIES

Even as early as the Āitareya Brāhmaṇa we meet terms like rājya, sāmrājya, bhaujya, svārājya, pārameṣṭhya, māhārājya, ādhipatya and svāvēśya¹, most of which refer to a gradation of kingship. In very much later times in the Mānasāra² the nine ranks of kings graded in a descending order are cakravartin, mahārāja, narendra, pākṣanika, paṭṭadhara, maṇḍaleśa, paṭṭabhaḥ, prahāraka and astragraha. Here we have eight ranks of feudatories under the paramount ruler and out of these pākṣanika, paṭṭadhara, maṇḍaleśa and paṭṭabhaḥ appear to have signified landed aristocracy whereas prahāraka and astragraha were most likely petty military chiefs. It is however to be noted that these ranks spoken of in the Mānasāra are only theoretical ones. Of these only one maṇḍaleśa appears in the inscriptions of the early mediaeval period and then the form is māṇḍalika or maṇḍaleśvara, sometimes with mahā prefixed to them. But in any case they suggest that in the society of that period such a gradation was the common practice. The dictionaries of our period, without mentioning the details of the different grades of

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1. VII.3.14; VIII.12.4-5; VIII.14.2-3. Cf. Rau, Staat und Gesellschaft, 1957, p.50, where over twenty terms of this kind are quoted from Brāhmaṇas.
 2. XLII.2ff.

feudatories, speak of three main types of rulers, viz., the king (rājan), the emperor (sārvabhauma) and, between these, the other rulers called mandaleśvaras.¹

In the early mediaeval period we find a number of feudal titles indicating different grades of feudatories and feudal chiefs. The Aparājitaśreṇā² describes these titles denoting grades in terms of the number of villages held by them. Besides the holder of 50, 20, 3, 2 and 1 villages at the bottom, the list contains the following :-

Titles	Villages held
<u>Mahāmandaleśvara</u>	100,000
<u>Māṇḍalika</u>	50,000
<u>Mahāsāmanta</u>	20,000
<u>Sāmanta</u>	10,000
<u>Laghu-sāmanta</u>	5,000
<u>Caturamśika</u>	1,000

The ranks postulated in the text are found in the inscriptions of the contemporary period, though laghu-sāmantas and caturamśikas are not specifically mentioned. The epigraphic sources do not, however, contain any indication to fix their technical import like the one referred to in the present text. We feel

1. Nāmaṇḍalikā, p.27 ll.428-9; Abhidhānaratnamālā, vv.421-22.
2. p.203.

that in actual practice the exact number of villages was probably not always fixed.¹ The list in the Aparājita-prcchā is a puerile and pedantic exercise in numbers. That the list presents only a theoretical norm would further follow from the Rājavallabha² of Maṇḍana Paṇḍita which gives different numbers of villages and even some entirely different terms in some cases :

Titles	Villages held
<u>Mahāmāṇḍalika</u>	200,000
<u>Māṇḍalika</u>	50,000
<u>Sāmāntamukhya</u>	2,000
<u>Sāmānta</u>	1,000
<u>Śatādhipa</u>	100

1. The Śukranīti I.365-67 defines different grades of rulers in terms of the annual revenue they received :

Titles	Annual revenue in <u>karsas</u>
<u>Sāmānta</u>	Between 1 lakh and 3 lakhs
<u>Māṇḍalika</u>	,, 3 ,, 10 ,,
<u>Rājā</u>	,, 10 ,, 20 ,,
<u>Mahārāja</u>	,, 20 ,, 50 ,,
<u>Svarāt</u>	,, 50 ,, 1 crore
<u>Samrāt</u>	,, 1 crore ,, 10 ,,
<u>Virāt</u>	,, 10 ,, 50 ,,
<u>Sārvabhauma</u>	to whom the earth with its seven islands is ever bound.

2. q. by Pran Nath, Economic condition, pp.37f.

It is however clear that the tradition of hierarchy of feudal chiefs was well established¹ even though there was laxity as regards the precise number of villages held by each designation. The Rājataranginī would testify to the presence in Kashmir of adhīśvara², maṇḍaleśvara³, rājan⁴, rājanya⁵, sāmanta⁶, deśa-ṭhakkura⁷ and ṭhakkura⁸, besides the ḍāmaras. The Kharataragaccha-paṭṭāvalī mentions mahāmaṇḍalesvara, māṇḍalika, sāmanta and rāṇaka as the designations of the feudatories of Prthvīrāja Cāhamāna⁹. The Varṇaratnākara¹⁰, a later text from Mithilā, which records early mediaeval traditions, refers to maṇḍalika, sāmanta, mahāsāmanta, deśapati and rāuta.

Grades of feudatories are also mentioned in the landgrants of the period when the donor/king addresses his officers and informs them about the grant and requires them to see to it that

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1. See N.I.A., III.319f for a Tamil Jain text of the 13th century mentioning designations makutavardhana, adhirājan, mahārāja, ardhamandalika, mandalika, mahāmandalika, ardha-cakravartī or vāsaudeva and sakalacakravartī. But the number of villages given is fantastically high.
 2. VIII.539.
 3. VIII.1814.
 4. VIII.15.
 5. VIII.510.
 6. VIII.102.
 7. VIII.548.
 8. VIII.554.
 9. I.H.Q., XXVI.227.
 10. pp. 36, 64.

the donee is not disturbed in the enjoyment of the grant. In the inscriptions from Bengal we meet rājan, rājānaka, rājanyaka and rānaka¹ with mahāsāmanta appearing in some cases after other officers.² These names are to be found in the landgrants from Assam also.³ In a record belonging to the time of Mahendrapala of the Pratihara dynasty we have only rājan and rājanya.⁴ The fuller lists from Orissa contain śrīsāmanta, mahāsāmanta, mahārāja, rājānaka and rājaputra.⁵ In some cases, however, we have only rājan, rājanaka and rājaputra⁶ or simply rājanaka and rājaputra.⁷ The records from Orissa are sometimes found addressed to the rānaka only.⁸ In the inscriptions from Chamba state also the usual list is of rājan, rājānaka and rājaputra.⁹ It has to be noted that these lists from different regions are not addressed to maṇḍaleśvaras and māṇḍalikas who appear to have been semi-independent feudatory governors. Maṇḍalapati no doubt is found in some inscriptions from Orissa where it occurs along with the heads of other administrative divisions such as viṣaya

1. E.I., XXX.205ff; XVII.348ff; I.B., III.14ff.

2. E.I., XV.295ff; XVIII.304ff

3. E.I., XXXII.288ff.

4. E.I., IX.4ff.

5. E.I., XXIX.40ff; XI.284ff; XXIII.268f; XIX.135f.

6. E.I., XXVII.338ff.

7. E.I., XXIII.262f.

8. E.I., XXXIII.266ff.

9. Vogel, Antiquities of Chamba State, Introduction.

khaṇḍa.¹

We know that the term sāmanta, which originally means 'neighbouring', was used in the Maurya period in the sense of 'neighbouring states'.² In legal works the term means a neighbouring cultivator. Gradually the term was applied to subordinate neighbouring kings and hence to feudatories. This use of the term finds confirmation in the epigraphic records of the sixth century. Sometimes the feudatories were given offices by the overlord in his empire, on the other hand we have references to suggest a parallel tendency of the royal officials rising to the status of feudatories. It was therefore natural that the term came to refer to royal officials.³ In the works of Bāṇa we have many references to the presence of the sāmantas at the royal court.⁴ It would appear from the Bṛhatsaṃhitā of Varāhamihira that the sāmantas had their mansions at the capital of the emperor.⁵ It is significant that sāmanta is mentioned in the Rājataranginī⁶ for the first time in the earlier half of

1. E.I., XXVIII.324ff.

2. The Second Rock Edict of Aśoka speaks of the Greek king Antiochus and others who were sāmanta to him - Ye vā pi tassa Aṃtiyokasa sāmanta rājāno - C.I.I., I pp.184ff. The Girnar version of the edict uses sāṃipā rājāno for sāmanta rājāno.

3. J.E.S.H.O., I.307-8.

4. Harsacarita, pp.121, 126, 144, 156; Kādambarī, pp.193f.

5. LII.8.

6. III.232.

the sixth century when Mātrgupta is said to have been received by ministers attended by the sāmantas. In the early mediaeval period sāmanta mostly denoted petty feudal barons who had the right to enjoy the income of certain number of villages but who generally lived at the capital city. The Samarāṅgasūtra-dhāra ascribed to king Bhoja has interesting references to indicate the status of a sāmanta in the period. In laying down trees for making kīlakas for the ~~xxx~~ house of different people it mentions those for the sāmantas along with the four castes, after the kṣatriyas and before the vaiśyas.¹ This may be taken to indicate the social status of the sāmantas and also their vast numbers. Elsewhere also in speaking of the āyatana-niveśa it does not mention the sāmantas along with high officers but summarily dismisses them along with elephant-drivers, warriors and city-dwellers.² From another reference it is clear that the samantas were residing in the capital city.³ That sāmanta often stood for petty feudal chiefs would receive support from ~~the~~ Medhātithi⁴ who explains rājānaḥ as rulers of countries (janapadeśvarāḥ) and kṣatriyas as sāmantas dependent

1. I p.206 vv.4-6.

2. I p.275 v.13.

3. I p.66 v.44.

4. On Manu XII.46.

for their living upon the king (tadanujīvinah sāmantaḥ). The Udayasundarīkathā¹ which speaks of Rājasūri as the mahattama among the poets even though born in a family of sāmantas would suggest that a sāmanta was assigned a low social status. In the Śārṅgadharapaddhati the sāmantas are mentioned along with rājaputras and other trusted servants as those whom the king should appoint to serve as his body-guards.² The Varṇaratnākara, which is known to have preserved the traditions of early mediaeval times, also mentions sāmanta in its list of the servants of a king (rājasevaka).³ In the grants of the Śilāhara king Aparājita⁴ in the list of the people addressed we have the expression grāmabhoktr̥sāmantarājaputra. Even if we do not take grāmabhoktr̥ to mean a chief enjoying the assignment of a village, which to us seems to be its natural interpretation, we clearly notice the status of a sāmanta being mentioned with a village lord and a rājaputra. In inscriptions from some other areas also the grants are addressed to people headed by the sāmantas (sāmantapramukhajanapadān)⁵ which suggests that the sāmantas were petty chiefs whose number was almost unlimited. At times sāmanta would appear to have been used in the sense

1. p.154.

2. v.1924.

3. p.64.

4. Gadre, Inscriptions from Baroda, pp.55-64.

5. E.g., XI.149ff. Cf. E.I., XXVI.168ff - cātabhatasāmanta-
raṭṭhakurakuṭumbinajanapadān.

of a military chief. In the Sone-East-Bank grant of Indradeva and Udayarāja dated A.D. 1197 the list of the people addressed includes sāmanta after the chiefs in charge of elephants, horses, camels and navy and the dandanāyaka¹ and before the officers in the army (senādhikārikas)². The position of sāmanta in the list would suggest that sāmantas in our period often served the overlord with their military service. That the forces of the sāmantas formed an important part of the armies of the sovereign kings has been seen elsewhere in detail.³ A grant of king Hariścandra, the only one of all Gāhaḍavāla grants to mention sāmantas, places the term between pratihārī and senāpati⁴ which also falls in line with this aspect of the activities of the sāmantas.

As the term itself suggests mahāsāmanta denoted a higher class of feudal chiefs. Actually mahāsāmantas were feudatories of considerable power and importance. Thus we find feudatory rulers with this title making landgrants throughout northern

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1. Dandanāyaka is variously interpreted by scholars. Stein, Rājataranginī, VII.951 explains it as 'prefect of police'. Danda means both army and justice and hence dandanāyaka may mean either general or magistrate.
 2. E.I., XXIII.227ff 11.17-18.
 3. See *supra* pp. 69-103.
 4. E.I., X.93ff.

India. In some of the records of the Pāla dynasty mahāsāmanta is not mentioned along with petty chiefs such as rājan, rājanyaka and rājaputra but with important officers such as mahāsāndhivigrahika, mahākṣapaṭalika, mahāsenāpati and mahāpratihāra.¹ This may be taken to suggest that sometimes mahāsāmanta referred to some office or distinguished status and was not merely the title of a feudatory chief. He might have been appointed to exercise a sort of general control over and guide the conduct of the feudatories of the king.² We get the same impression from some grants of the Kalacuris. These records in addressing the queen, the heir-apparent and the heads of different branches of administration mention mahāsāmanta also in the singular number³ thereby indicating that in the Kalacuri kingdom there was only one mahāsāmanta as for the other chiefs offices. This suggestion suits some records from Orissa⁴ which are stated to have been written, sealed and engraved by men whose offices and names are given but the dūtakas are mentioned with mahāsāmanta only attached to their names. It is clear that these mahāsāmantas did not occupy any other posts in the

1. E.I., XV.295ff; XVIII.304ff.

2. B.C.Sen, Historical aspects of Bengal inscriptions, p.544.

3. C.I.I., IV pp. 236ff, 252ff, 324ff, 633ff.

4. E.I., XIX.135f; XXIV.134ff.

kingdom.

In some records we find references to a mahāsāmantādhipati.¹ It has been suggested that he was an officer appointed to exercise a general control over the feudatories; he was the link through which the king's contact with the sāmantas was maintained.² It would appear that this post was generally given to the most powerful among the feudatories themselves. We often find that the titles mahāsāmantādhipati and mahāmāṇḍalika were alike used by the same person.³ When such a mahāsāmantādhipati became really powerful enough not to care much for the wishes of his overlord he assumed the title of a mahārāja which is known to have been used by independent rulers.⁴

Śrīsāmanta from its position in the list of people addressed in landgrants appears to have been lower than the mahāsāmantas but higher than the rājānakes and rājaputras.⁵ It would seem that śrīsāmanta was not an office but indicated a certain status probably the right to enjoy certain villages. Thus we find in the records many people who occupy distinct offices in the state having this title attached to their names.⁶

1. Khalimpur grant of Dharmapāla - E.I., IV.243ff.

2. B.C.Sen, *Op. cit.*, p.542.

3. I.A., XII.96.

4. Sundarban copper plate of Maḍommanapāla - I.H.Q., X.321ff 1.2.

5. E.I., XXIII.79f; XXVI.168ff.

6. E.I., XVIII.342f.

Rānaka does not appear to have a uniform connotation. We suggest that it was derived from the feudatory title of rāja-naka or rājanyaka. Vogel¹ suggested that rājānaka in Chamba records corresponded to rānā and was used as a title for the vassals. He describes rājānaka as a Sanskritised rather than a real Sanskrit word. Rājanyaka is a diminutive form of rājanya which means a kṣatriya or a king.² Rājānaka may be recognised as an apparent corruption of rājanyaka.³ Rānaka may be said to have been a transformation of rājānaka.⁴ An analysis of the Pāla records also indicates that the rājānaka and rānaka were interchangeable. The list of personages addressed to in the

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1. Antiquities of the Chamba State, pp. 110, 121.
 2. Monier-Williams refers to the use of rājanya as a masculine in the sense of a royal personage, one of princely rank, a nobleman, a man of the military or regal tribe, a kṣatriya.
 3. U.C.Uhlenbeck derives rājānaka from the accusative of rājan. Vogel, *Loc. cit.*, p. 110 f.n. 2. Grierson - J.R.A.S., 1907, p. 409 suggests a connection between rājānaka and the Prakrit title rājāṇa which occurs on coins of an earlier period.
 4. Rānaka is not mentioned by Bohtlingk and Roth and Monier-Williams in the sense of a ruler. The Ardha-Magadhi dictionary by Muni Ratanchandraji Mahārāja, Vol. V notes both rānā and rānaya in the sense of a ruler and equates them respectively with rājan and rājaka. Wilson, Glossary of fiscal terms suggests that rānā is probably a corruption of rājā - Vogel, Antiquities of Chamba State, p. 110 derives rānā directly from rājan suggesting it to be the oblique case of the word rājan transferred to the nominative.

grants has in the Bangarh and other later Pāla inscriptions the form rājarājanyaka, in the grants of Dharmapāla it is rāja-rājanaka, in the Bhagalpur grant of Nārāyaṇapāla we have rājā-rānaka, while the Monghyr grant of Devapāla omits rāja altogether and begins the list with rānaka¹. In two inscriptions from Baijnath (Kangra)² we meet a family of rājānakas. They are stated to have ruled over a single village or a small town. But in reality they appear to have possessed a larger territory. This would follow from the fact that a member of this family married a princess of the royal family of Jālandhara-Trigarta. These inscriptions refer to the deśa (territory) of one of these rājānakas³. Significantly enough we find that in two documents in the Lekhapaddhati⁴ deśa is the term used for the territory granted to a rānaka by the king. But in some inscriptions from Bengal and Assam rājānaka or rājanyaka and rānaka have been used side by side which would indicate that often they denoted two distinct grades of feudatories. The possibility however cannot be ruled out that the man who prepared the draft of the grants put all the prevalent terms for feudal chiefs, rulers and officers with a view to make the

1. B.C.Sen, Op. cit., p.535.

2. E.I., I.104-7, 112-5.

3. Ibid., pp.104ff v.27; pp.112ff vv.20-21.

4. p. 7.

list impressive and in doing so he used terms having similar or identical meaning. In the inscriptions from Bengal rānaka is preceded by rājanyaka but followed by rājaputra¹. The inscriptions from Assam indicate however that the rānakas were higher dignitaries while the rājanakas have been bracketed with other and lower ranks.²

It seems hardly doubtful that rānaka usually stood for a ruler, especially in view of an inscription from Kara in Allahabad which mentions the queen of a rānaka.³ The status of a rānā is indicated clearly by an inscription from Nadlai (Jodhpur) which refers to a certain rānā Lakhamana as considered higher in rank than the chief of a village but under Kelhapa who was ruling at Nāḍūlya under the suzerainty of Caulukya king Kumārapāla.⁴ In the Gāhaḍavāla kingdom we find a rāuta referring not only to the emperor at Kanyakubja but also to the rājya (kingdom) of the rānaka immediately above him.⁵ Three

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1. Belava copper plate of the Varmanas (I.E., III.14ff) and the Barrackpur (ibid., 61ff), Naihati (E.I., XIV.159ff) and Anulia (I.E., III.85ff) grants of the Senas. In the Rampal copper plate of Śrī-Candra (ibid., 1 ff) rānaka occurs next to rājā.
 2. E.I., XXXII.288ff; XXX.205ff.
 3. E.I., XXII.39.
 4. E.I., XI.48.
 5. J.A.S.B (N.8), VII.763ff.

charters in the Lekhapaddhati¹ throw also light upon the status of a rānaka. One of these is a grant of a deśa by a king to a rānaka. In the second a minister (mahāmātya) conveys to the officers the information of the grant of a deśa to a rānaka by the king and requires them to pay henceforth all the dues to the rānaka.² The third is a charter of a rānaka granting a village as a feudal assignment to a rājaputra. Rānaka appears to have been a coveted title for important feudatories and governors. Thus under Dandimahādevī there was a maṇḍalādhipati with the designation of a rānaka.³ The title is also found associated with the name of mahāmaṇḍalika Piplarāja, ruler of Kekind and mahāmaṇḍaleśvara Lavaprasāda and Vīradhavalā. Dommanapāla who was virtually independent of any control of the Senas used alike the titles of rānaka, mahārāja and mahāsāmanta. Likewise the practically independent Bhañja rulers in Orissa are known to have used the title of rānaka. Sometimes mahā-rānaka was used to indicate a higher status than the ordinary rānakas. Thus we find the title mahārānaka being used for

1. p. 7.

2. Prof. R.S.Sharma - J.E.S.H.O., IV.96-8 interprets this as a charter granted by a mahāmātya which the rānaka accepted and undertook to pay to the mahāmātya all dues loyally and honestly.

3. E.I., XXIX.87ff.

Kīrttivarman.¹ From the Rewa grants² we learn about a family of mahārānakas of Kakareḍika who owed allegiance to the Cedi kings.

Sometimes rānaka appears to have been used as an honorific. Thus we find that in an inscription from Rajghat,³ whereas Maṅgadeva and his grandson Bhīmadeva were mahāsāndhivigrahikas under a line of the kings of Gauḍa, his son Chaṅgadeva is stated to have received the title 'rānaka of the kingdom' which according to the inscription itself was very difficult to obtain. It may fairly be conjectured that Chaṅgadeva, like his father and son, was an officer, most probably a mahāsāndhivigrahika, but had been honoured by the title on account of some unique service rendered to the king. In some of the inscriptions from Orissa⁴ we meet mahāsāndhivigrahikas who had the title of rānaka attached to their name. In an inscription of king Mahā-Bhavagupta II⁵ a brāhmaṇa with the title of rānaka appears as donee. In the Rewah plates of Trailokyamalladeva⁶ a village is said to have been pledged to a rānaka Dharaka. A rānaka appears as the surety in a mortgage deed recorded in the Jaunpur

1. C.I.I., IV. 340ff.

2. I.A., XVII. 224-30.

3. E.I., XXXII. 281f.

4. E.I., XXVIII. 324ff; III. 347ff; VIII. 141ff; XI. 96ff.

5. E.I., III. 356ff.

6. E.I., XXV. 5f.

brick inscription dated 1215 A.D.¹

Another term which appears to have been used for a feudal chief in the period is thākkura.² A thākkura was obviously a man of opulence who was always accompanied by his servant.³ Thākkura, however, does not appear in the list of feudal chiefs addressed to in landgrants. This may have been due to the fact that the term was usually applicable to petty village chiefs. But thākkura was not a mere honorific or appellation like śrī

1. J.U.P.H.S., XVIII.196f.

2. The etymology of the word is not known to us. Monier-Williams takes it to mean 'an idol, a deity, an object of reverence or worship; an honorific title after the name of a distinguished person. The Ardha Magadhi Dictionary of Muni Ratna Chandraji Mahārāja regards thākkura as a Sanskrit term and explains it as meaning a Kṣatriya, a Rājputa or a holder of a village. Wilson, Glossary of fiscal terms explains thākkura as referring to any individual entitled to reverence or respect, whence it is generally applied to persons of rank and authority in different parts of India, as a lord, a chief, a master, a spiritual guide, the Bhāt or genealogist, the head of a tribe, the head of a village and the like : in the west it is commonly given to the great feudal nobles of Rajputana, as Bhīm Sing Thākur, etc., and is the usual title of a Rājput or Grāsia chieftain elsewherein upper India it frequently denotes the individual members of village communities or Brahmanical or Rājput descent, who are notorious for irregular and turbulent conduct. Wilson mentions thākuraī as the rank or office of a chief or thākur and thākuraī as the holding or tenure or rank of a thākur.
3. Uktivyaktiprakarana, p.48 l.20.

has been suggested by some.¹ On the other hand we definitely find that both thakkura and ārī are mostly used together. Obviously thakkura signified some special position. This becomes clearer from inscriptions which mention many state officers by name but use thakkura only for a few of them.² In this connection the testimony of the Lucknow Museum plates of Kīrtipāla³ is significant. They mention by name two mahāpurohitas but thakkura is added to the name of only one of them. Out of the seventeen names of the important personalities only two are found using thakkura. That thakkura had no connotation of caste would follow from the fact that in the inscriptions it is used alike for brāhmanas,⁴ kṣatriyas⁵ and kāyasthas.⁶ It is clear from inscriptions which apply thakkura to ministers and other officers⁷ that thakkura was not an office. We may conclude from the available references that it was a title and its holder was entitled to some advantage most probably in the form of the right to enjoy the revenues of a village. An inscription from Nadlai (Jodhpur)⁸ speaks of a thakkura as the usual authority

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1. R.Niyogi, History of the Gāhadavāla Dynasty, p.219.
 2. C.I.I., IV.324ff, 645ff, 365ff; E.I., XXXII.69ff.
 3. E.I., VII.95-98.
 4. I.A., XV.7f.
 5. E.I., XI.36f.
 6. E.I., IV no.11 (C).
 7. A.S.R., 1935-6, pp.90ff.
 8. E.I., XI.4.

for a village. In the Rewah plates of Trailokyamalladeva¹ which records the mortgage of a village by a Śaiva teacher to a certain rāpaka, a thakkura has been authorised to take possession of the village evidently on behalf of the mortgagee. That thakkura was slightly lower in status than a rāuta would be suggested by grants in which the donee appears as a rāuta whereas his father and grand-father are mentioned as thakkuras.² Another inscription from Nadlai dated 1145 A.D. records grants of certain revenues by a certain rāuta Rājadeva who was the thakkura of Nadūlaḍāgikā. It is clear that thakkura refers to his position as village chief whereas rāuta refers to his higher status of a rājaputra. It would appear that though technically speaking thakkura and rāuta denoted a different status in actual practice both had a more or less similar use being alike connected with the enjoyment of villages. In yet another inscription from the same same place³ this very man Rājadeva is mentioned as thakkura when he is being referred to in the earlier part of the inscription but in his signature later on he is called a rāuta. From the Mualim accounts also we gather the impression that India at the time of the Muslim

1. E.I., XXV.5f.

2. I.A., XV.11f; XVIII.134ff.

3. E.I., XI.36f.

invasions was dominated by feudal chiefs called thakkuras who paid the revenue and the tribute to their overlords.¹ Elliot was doubtful if takars at one place in the Chach-nāma meant thākurs but observed that at another place the word is used apparently as a foot-soldier, in opposition to horseman; in other places however it is used in conjunction with governors and nobles thus corresponding exactly with thākura.² Elsewhere in the same text we read of Chach after capturing the fort of Multan appointing a thākura as his deputy there.³ We also read of two thākuras who were in command of the soldiers of king Jaisiya.⁴

The Aparājitaprocā⁵ mentions the rājaputras as the lowest in the hierarchy of feudatories and observes that their number in the empire is countless. This is supported by the land-grants of the period which mention the rājaputras at the end of the list of the feudatories addressed. We have already referred to some evidence mentioning the rājaputras as being under a rānaka. In the inscriptions of the period we often meet the form rā which is the abbreviation for rāuta, a trans-

1. Al-Baihaqī in Elliot and Dowson, II.123.

2. Elliot and Dowson, I.164 f.n. 2.

3. I.143.

4. Ibid., I.200.

5. p.196 v.34.

formation for rājaputra. That rājaputra or rāuta in the context of these inscriptions had no restricted application to any one caste is obvious from cases where it is used for kṣatriyas and brāhmaṇas alike.¹ In the Jaunpur brick inscription² a rāuta borrows money from two rāutas and five rāutas appear as witnesses but there is only one rāpaka mentioned in the inscription who stands surety. This suits the interpretation of rāuta and rāpaka suggested by us. In a Lekhapaddhati document³ a rāpaka grants a village to a rājaputra and requires him to collect revenues according to existing customs, maintain law and order and when required provide the rāpaka with 100 foot soldiers and 20 horses. Elsewhere in the same text we learn of a rājaputra farming out the village revenues for collection by merchant contractors.⁴ It would appear that either the rājaputras needed cash or else possessed more than one village and could not cope with the duty of collecting the revenues.

For bhogapati, bhogika or mahābhogika B.C.Sen⁵ suggests two possibilities. He may be regarded as an official entrusted

1. E.I., IV.111f; I.A., XVIII.134ff.

2. J.U.P.H.S., XVIII.196f.

3. p.7.

4. pp. 8f.

5. Historical aspects of Bengal inscriptions, p.556.

with the collection of the specific tax bhoga, which was one of the sources of revenue to the state; or the designation may have been assumed by a delimitation officer, whose function was to examine and settle all questions relating to the boundaries of a kingdom. For the second explanation he relies on the Bhumara stone pillar inscription of the mahārājas Hastin and Śarvvanātha¹, in which he claims, the term bhoga appears in connection with the setting up of a boundary pillar between the dominions of the two kings. We may point out that in this inscription there is no intrinsic connection between bhoga and setting up of a boundary pillar. Bhoga is used in connection with the territory under Śarvvanātha whereas rājya has been used in connection with the territory under Hastin. As has been rightly pointed out by D.C.Sircar² bhoga stands here for a feudal estate situated in the kingdom of Hastin. He has further convincingly shown that the record in question does not at all refer to the setting up of a boundary pillar between two kingdoms. On the other hand it speaks of the erection of a memorial staff in the feudal estate under Śarvvanātha which was situated in the kingdom under Hastin. As regards the first

1. C.I.I., III p.111.

2. E.I., XXX. no. 32.

explanation suggested by B.C.Sen we may point out that though the form bhogika may support it, bhogapati will go against it. Fleet interpreted it as a territorial term derived from bhoga, taken in the sense of a bhukti. Thus to Fleet bhogapati was a provincial governor.

Thus we see that in early mediaeval India the literary works postulate different grades of feudatories and feudal chiefs. A comparative study of the epigraphic records indicates that there were slight variations in different periods and different regions in the form of the names for these grades. Sometimes we find that a certain term indicating a specific grade of feudatory is not found in the records of a particular period or region. This may be taken to suggest that all the different grades were not necessarily in vogue in all the periods and regions. This fact may be connected to some extent with the size of the kingdom and its strength, especially in regard to the relations with the feudatories. If the central authority was strong or the kingdom was not a very large one there was not much possibility for the existence of big states of feudatories. It was in the kingdoms which arose in central and western parts of northern India after the decline of the Pratihāras that we find a regular use of the different terms denoting

various grades of feudatories. It appears that in these kingdoms there was an attempt to use all these terms and in their strict order of gradation.

CHAPTER VIII - PAÑCAMAHĀŚABDA

I In a feudal society we often find unusual devices to confer honour on a feudal lord. In mediaeval Europe elaborate ceremonies accompanied the conferring of a fief. We get no details about such practices in the early mediaeval India. The way feudal lords claim in the epigraphs of the period to have acquired pañcamahāśabdas indicate that it was a feudal title indicating a privileged position. Inscriptions attest to the use of the title from the seventh century onwards. It is therefore absolutely wrong to conclude that it did not exist before the eighth century A.D.¹ In the Prince of Wales Museum plates of 675 A.D. it is applied to Dadda III² and in the Kesares plates of 655 A.D. to Nikumbhāllasakti³. In the plates of Mahārāja Jayavarmadeva assigned to the seventh century also the dūtaka appears as endowed with pañcamahāśabdas⁴. The title was more popular in Central India and the Deccan than in the north. We find the feudatories of the Caulukyas, the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, the Paramāras, the Kalachuris of Tripuri and

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1. B.P. Mazumdar, Socio-Economic History of Northern India, p. 24.
 2. C.I.I., IV pp. 617-22.
 3. Ibid., pp. 110-116.
 4. E.I., XXIII. 262f.

Ratanpur, the Pratihāras, the Bhañjas and the Somavamāis using the title.

Gramatically the term pañcamahāśabda could mean (1) 'the five great sounds', i.e. musical instruments producing these sounds or (2) 'the five words (starting with) mahā', and the different theories on its meaning are based on either of the two possibilities.

There is a wide range of difference in the views of scholars regarding the exact connotation of the term.¹ It is interesting to note that J.F.Fleet advocated three different views at different times. Originally he took the term to be identical with the pañcamahāmentra of the Jainas which denotes the five titles of arhat, siddha, ācārya, upādhyāya and sarva-sādhū.² Later he held that it denoted five titles of rank and honour.³ Finally he accepted that it denoted the sounds of five musical instruments, the use of which was allowed, as a special mark of distinction, to persons of high rank and authority.⁴

1. Proceedings and Transactions of the Seventh All-India Oriental Conference, pp.653ff.

2. J.B.B.R.A.S., IX p.307 note.

3. Ibid., X p.307 note.

4. C.I.I., III p.297 note.

It is clear from a study of relevant data¹ that the connotation of the term varied in different times and different parts of India. Thus it appears from the Rājataranginī¹ that the five titles covered by the term were mahāpratihārapīda (high chamberlain), mahāsāndhivigraha (minister for peace and war), mahāsāvāla (chief master of horses), mahābhāṇḍāgāra (high keeper of treasury), and mahāsādhanaabdhāga (chief executive officer). The recipients of the title in the Rājataranginī are said to have controlled these five offices singly. It appears from an inscription of Mahasamanta Visvasena that in Gujarat also the pañcamahāsābdas denoted five titles beginning with mahā in any case in the sixth century. Bühler² noticed long ago that the five titles mahāsāmenta, mahāpratihāra, mahādandanāyaka, mahākārtakṛtika and mahārāja are attributed to Dhruvasena I (circa 525-545 A.D.) of the Maitraka dynasty. It is interesting to note that these very titles were used by a feudatory chief named Visvasena, who ruled in western India in the sixth century.³ We thus see a distinct tendency to use five high titles on the part of big feudatories. As

1. IV.140-43, 680.

2. I.A., IV p.106 note.

3. E.I., XXX no.30, l.1.

the titles in these cases are not the same as those in the Rājatarahgiṇī we may conclude that there was no uniformity as regards the title and any five of these beginning with mahā could be used. It has been pointed out that in the inscriptions of Assam the list of officers includes five beginning with mahā, mahāsāmanta, mahāmātya, mahāsainyapati, mahāpratihāra, and mahādvārapati¹. Thus it would appear that in some parts of India the expression was used to signify a distinguished chief who was endowed with five titles all beginning with mahā.

Fleet² had pointed out that in some of the records the expression is śeṣa-mahāśabda in place of pañcamahāśabda. But as he rightly observed the first form does not necessarily imply more than five mahāśabdas. This is clear from the fact that in some inscriptions the form is given as śeṣapañcamahāśabdas. Fleet cited only two instances - the Ambarnath inscription of the Śilāhāra chieftain Mamvani and the Anjaneri inscription of the Yādava Seunadeva. It may be added that there are also many other records which use this double form like the Bassein inscription of Śilāhāra Mallikārjuna³, the

1. Barua, Cultural History of Assam, pp. 52f.

2. C.I.I., III p. 297 f.n.

3. E.I., XXIII p. 276.

Chinohani grants of Cāmunḍarāja¹ and Vijjala², the Amloda plate of Prthivīdeva I³ and the Bandā plates of Paracakrasālya⁴. Fleet's interpretation is no doubt the best because it covers most of the references. But it does not recognise the possibility, suggested by some references which we have noticed above, that in some areas in some periods the term had a different use.

It must however be admitted that the more common connotation of the expression was the privilege of using the five musical instruments. At the very outset we may note that according to the Vaijayanti⁵ śabda is used in the sense of letter, fame, song, sentence, sky, hearing and sound. G.V. Acharya⁶ refers to a passage in the Mahāsudassana Sutta⁷ which speaks of the capital of the great king Sudassana as resounding with ten sorts of sounds (dasasadda) including those of bherī, mutiṅga and vīṇā. The testimony of the Māṇasollāsa⁸ unequivocally employs pañcamahāśabda in the sense of

1. E.I., XXXII p.66.

2. Ibid., pp.69ff.

3. C.I.I., IV pp.401-9.

4. E.I., XXX.139f.

5. p.218, l.117 - 'śabdo' kare yasogityorvākye khe śravane dhvanau.

6. E.I., XXIII.149.

7. Dīghanikāya, II.170. Cf. four great sounds in the Mahajanaka Jātaka. Pañceturīye of Pali works is also used in a similar sense.

8. II p.114 v.1336 - Tataḥ pañcamahāśabdairvādyamānsirvāśed-varah.

five musical instruments being sounded. We have found in the Prabandhacintāmaṇi¹ another very clear reference to pañcamahā-⁶
śabdas in the meaning of five musical instruments which were sounded when the king mounted his horse to go out to meet the invaders. In the story we read that a certain Kāku bribed the men who sounded these five musical instruments and they sounded them so terrificly that the horse of the king ran away. We have some other references where there have been mentioned by name five musical instruments though the term pañcaśabdas is absent. Thus in the Tilakamañjarī² we read that the halls of the outer portions (bāhyākakṣāntaram) of the palace of Tilakamañjarī had kept in them special musical instruments like duṇḍubhi (trumpets), śaṅkha (conch), jhallaṛī (rattle-drums), paṭaha (kettle-drums) and panava (tabor).

³ Growse pointed many years ago that a passage in the 19th

1. p.109 ll.10-11.

2. ~~(N.S.P.) 1912) p.16.~~ p.370. We read in the Kādambarī (N.S.P., 1912) p.16 that after king Sūdraka had taken his bath there arose, deafening the ears and piercing the quarters, the shrill sound of the conches blown at the bathing hour, enhanced by the sound of several large kettle-drums (paṭaha), rattle-drums (jhallaṛī), drums (mṛdaṅga), flutes (venu) and lutes (vinā), accompanied by song. If, however, we count conches also the number of instruments in this case will be six. Medhātithi on Manu VII.225 discussing the daily routine of a king says that after his supper he should sleep recreated by the sound of musical instruments like venu (flute), vinā (lute), panava (tabor), mṛdaṅga (kettle-drum), bherī, and śaṅkha (conch-shell).

3. I.A., V.354f.

book of Canda's Prthvīrāja Rāso refers to a noise of the five kinds of music playing every day. He traced a similar reference to the noise of the five kinds of music in the Rāmāyana of Tulasīdāsa. We have found an earlier and more definite reference to the auspicious character of the five musical instruments in the Varnaratnākara of Jyotirīśvara Kaviśekhara-cārya.¹ There it is stated that the five musical instruments sounded at temples precisely correct according to the divisions of a day convey information of dawn.

It is interesting to note that according to Al-Baihaqī prince Amīr Majdūd on his appointment as a governor of Hindustan received a khil'at which included a drum and a kettle-drum.² A similar khil'at given to Amīr Madūd is said to have included a kettle-drum, a tymbal and a tabor.³ Elsewhere the same authority, speaking of the honours bestowed by Shāh Mas'ūd on Tilak, significantly observes that kettle-drums were beaten at his quarters according to the custom of the Hindu chiefs.⁴

1. p.14 - Devaka āyatana pañcaśabda vādu vājam danda pala ghali je prabhāta jhāna karāla. The Padmāvata of Jayasī also mentions a constant playing of naqqāra, shahnāi, karnāi, turalī and jhānī at the palace - J.R.A.S.B., 1935 (L) p.161, f.n.1.

2. Elliot and Dowson, II.134.

3. Ibid., 135.

4. Ibid., 128f.

I find only the testimony of the Chach-Nama¹ significant and explicit. Speaking of the old fort of Kanarpur near Makran which Chach rebuilt it says that, according to the Hindu custom, a naubat of five musical instruments, was played every evening and morning in the fort.

A careful study of inscriptions clearly indicates that the expression has to be interpreted in terms of the privilege to use musical instruments. Fleet had noticed that Kalacuri Bijjala, the Raṭṭa chieftains of Saundatti and Belgaum and the Kadambas of Goa had special musical instruments² played before them. It has to be noted that the Gaṅga family of Orissa is said to have obtained the distinction to use the five musical instruments like śaṅkha (conch) and bherī (drum).³ This inscription does not leave any doubt about the nature of the privilege implied by the expression. The explanation in terms of titles referring to offices does not suit cases where the recipient of the pañcamahāśabda is further stated to have been a mahā-eāndhivigrahika and a sāmanta.⁴

It must be admitted that the north Indian records do not

1. Elliot and Dowson I.152.

2. C.I.I., III p.279 f.n.

3. E.I., IV p.24 ll.7-9 - Śaṅkhabherīpañcamahāśabda.

4. E.I., X.89; C.I.I., IV.137-45.

give help in identifying the five musical instruments implied by the title. According to the Jaina writer Revākopyācāra and the Liṅgāyata Vivekacintāmaṇi, these were the śrṅga (horn), śaṅkha (conch), bherī (drum), jayaghanta (gong or the bell of victory) and tammata (tambour).¹

All these references leave no scope for the theory of Elliot² connecting the term with the neubat or imperial band playing at the courts of kings five times daily. There is no specific reference to this practice in Indian sources of the early mediaeval period. The only available examples are in two passages from Firishta.

It appears from the existing records that pañcamahāśabda was an honour conferred on his feudatories by the overlord. Thus we find that the title is used mostly by feudatories like mahāśamantā, mahāśamantādhipati, mandaleśvara, mahāmandaleśvara, rānaka and mahārānaka. Under the Paramāras of Malwa we find mahākumāras such as Lakṣmīvarmadeva, Hariścandra, Udayavarmadeva and Devapāla also being endowed with this title.³ In some

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1. I.A., XII.95-96. Cf. the list in an inscription belonging to the reign of Rājendra I - J.B.B.R.A.S. (N.8) I.240.
 2. I.A., V.251f, 354f.
 3. B.P.Mazumdar, Socio-Economic History, p.39 n.138. Fleet, C.I.I., III p.297 f.n. mentions its being applied to paramount rulers Amoghavarṣa I and Kakka of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and Devapāla of Dhārā. We may suggest that in these cases the earlier title as prince was associated with them by mistake.

cases the feudatories endowed their own feudatories with this title. Thus, it appears that under the Caulukya Bhima II his feudatory at Kirāta-kūpa (Kiraḍu) bestowed the privilege upon his own feudatory general Meheta Tejapāla¹. We have some records in which the title is applied to individuals with the designations of mahāsāndhivigrahika also. We suggest that some of the officers were admitted to the status of sāmanta and then the title of pañcamahāsabḍa was conferred on them. Thus we see that Cāṣmāna Vaijalladeva who originally was a daṇḍanāyaka (military chief)² was raised to the status of maṇā-maṇḍaleśvara with the title of pañcamahāsabḍa³. We may suggest therefore conclude that pañcamahāsabḍa was a title conferred upon distinguished feudatories.

The inscriptions do not generally mention the authority conferring the privilege. The usual formulae in the inscriptions merely refer to its being obtained (samadhigata, samā-vāpta, prāpta or labdha). Śilāhāra king Aparājitadeva claims to have obtained it by virtue of his might (avatejo'nubhāvāt)⁴.

1. Poona Orientalist, I.44.

2. D.H.N.I., II p.981 f.n.1.

3. I.A., XVIII.80-85.

4. Gadre, Inscriptions from Baroda, pp.46ff, 55ff.

The Eastern Gāṅgas claim to have obtained the pañcamahāsabda and other privileges through the favour of Candramauli Gokarṇeśvara of Mahendragiri.¹ The Deogadh inscription dated 862 A.D. states, however, clearly that the privilege of pañcamahāsabda possessed by mahāsāmanta Viṣṇu was conferred on him by his overlord Bhojadeva.²

It has been suggested that the term stands for a distinguished official, and that an attempt was made to create a superior grade of officers in order to introduce efficiency in administration.³ We have already seen that the practice was associated basically with feudatories, not with officers. Another suggestion is that it denoted an official who had successfully held five offices, having been promoted from one to the other.⁴ We find that though it was a privilege conferred on a distinguished minority it had a honorific value rather⁵

1. E.I., IV p.24 ll.7-9.

2. A.S.I., X p.101 - tatpradattapañcamahāsabda.

3. U.N.Ghoshal in Krishnaswami Aiyangar Commemoration Volume, pp. 30-32. Cf. Sukraniti, II.856f which advises that for distinguishing from distance a king should separate his officers by clothing, crowns, musical instruments and conveyances.

4. Barua, Cultural History of Assam, pp.52f.

5. Cf. Poona Orientalist, I p.44 - labdhapañcamahāsabdādi-sarvvalankāro. See also E.I., XLIV.232ff; C.I.I., IV.358ff.

than the designation of definite offices. This would better agree with references such as those of the whole family of the Gāṅgas receiving it.¹ The argument has greater force in a case like that of Vijayāditya Batyāsraya, who claims to have acquired it along with other distinctions for his father.²

1. E.I., IV p.24 11.7-9.

2. I.A., IX.126.

CHAPTER IX - STATUS AND OBLIGATIONS OF FEUDATORIES

In our period we find that the legal status of the feudatories had come to be determined in a general manner. We learn of some of the limitations from which a feudatory suffered and also of his status, influence and position at the imperial court. In any case, it is clear that the sāmantas as a body rather than as individuals, except of course in special cases, had an important voice at the court. Already in the Harṣacarita¹ we learn of the presence at the court of the chief sāmantas whose words carried weight and could not be lightly brushed aside.² The sāmantas were much concerned with the welfare of the empire and actively participated in the important rites and ceremonies. Thus, in the Harṣacarita the devoted sāmantas are said to have felt grief at the time of the illness of Prabhākaravardhana³ and when Rajyavardhana expressed his desire to take up the garb of an

1. p.153.

2. One gets, however, the impression from the Harṣacarita that these sāmantas that had influence in the court were not the ordinary feudatories but rather those that held court offices.

3. p.155 - ...santaptāpta-sāmanṭe....

ascetic.¹ In one of the stories of the Bṛhatkathākośa the tragic end of the king is conveyed in the first instance to his sāmantas.² In another story the feudatory kings are said to have crowned the third son of the king when the others were not alive.³ In other cases also where a king⁴ or a queen⁵ is inaugurated the sāmantas are mentioned as being in the forefront of the ceremony. Also in the Tilakamañjarī⁶ there is a reference to aged sāmantas performing the abhiṣeka of the heir-apparent (yuvarāja). Besides these references in popular works we find that the legal texts also require the participation of the feudatories in the royal consecration. Thus, the Brahma Purāṇa as quoted by the Kṛtyakalpatarū⁷ describes the sāmantas and ministers as holding the umbrella and waving fly-whisks etc. at the time of the coronation bath of the king. Nainsī's Khyāt,⁸ which, though written towards the middle of the seventeenth century, proves to be a good history

1. p.182.

2. LII.23.

3. XLVI.63.

4. XXII.17.

5. CXXX.15.

6. p.193.

7. Rājadharmakāṇḍa, p.10.

8. I p.78 q. by D.Sharma, Early Chauhān Dynasties, p.143 f.n.9.

of the Cāhamāna clans of our period,¹ records that when Sāmantasīṃha of Mewar, pleased with the services of his younger brother, offered him the throne, the latter eventually accepted it only on the condition that the nobles of Mewar approved of the transfer.²

The feudatories had their fixed seats in the court of the overlord. Thus, we read in the Mānasollāsa² that the princes and the priest (purodhas) sat in front of the king and the maṇḍalādhīśvaras and sāmanta-mantrins³ in front of the king on the right and left sides. The same text elsewhere advises the king to present dresses to his feudatories when they come to witness royal sports and games.⁴

The sāmantas had their distinctive emblems and other paraphernalia according to their status. In the Kiradu inscription⁵ dated A.D. 1174 the maham (= mahattaka) Tejapāla, who was serving mahārājaputra Madanebrahmadeva, a feudatory of

1. D.Sharma, Op. cit., p.343.

2. II p.104 vv.4-6. The Sukranīti, I.707-21 describes the seating arrangement in the council house (sabhā) of a king with fixed places for different persons.

3. We discuss the compound on pp.289-91.


4. III.4.38; IV.1.3.


5. Poona Orientalist, I no.4 p.44.

the Caulukya king Bhīma II as his chief minister and general, is said to have obtained all the distinctions including that of pañcamahāsabda. Generally pañcamahāsabda, which we have explained elsewhere,¹ refers to the privilege conferred upon distinguished feudatories to use five musical instruments. It is, however, difficult to determine the exact number and nature of the other privileges. Probably the sāmantas were permitted by their overlord to use special kind of banners, umbrellas, and crests. In an inscription from Devagiri bearing the date A.D. 600² but probably a forgery made in our period, as is evident from the type of script etc., mahāsāmantādhipati Śāntivarman is stated to have used the mandanavana umbrella, the horse-crest and the mirror-banner. Vijayāditya Satyaśraya is said to have acquired for his father the "tokens of the river Gaṅgā and Yamunā", the pālidhvaja³ (kind of banner), the

1. See supra pp. 236-41.

2. E.I., XI p.6.

3. Gaṅgā-Yamunā-pāli-dhvaja could also mean 'banner adorned with Gaṅgā and Yamunā'. We do not understand the significance of the term pāli used here. Pāli usually means a row or edge. It is not unlikely that it is intended to refer to a banner triangular in shape as opposed to a rectangular one. We wonder if the banner suggested here was like .

The expression Gaṅgā-Yamunā-pāli has been probably used to suggest that the two rows of the banner were not disjointed like  but were joined like the rivers Gaṅgā and Yamunā.

insignia of the dhakkā drum the mahāsabda, rubies and elephants.¹ These were obviously his distinctive marks as a sāmanta. The Eastern Gangas refer to their privilege to use, among other things, five musical instruments (pañcamahāsabda), including conch² and drum, and the white umbrella, golden fly-whisk, and a 'good ox' as their crest.³ Aparājitadeva, the Śilāhāra king, refers to a golden Garuḍa banner as his proud mark.⁴ In the Banda (Sambalpur) plates dated A.D. 1130⁵ mahāmāṇḍalāśvara mahāmāṇḍalika rāṇaka Paracakraśālya refers to his distinctive white umbrella, yellow fly-whisk and a banner with Garuḍa-mirror⁶ (Garuḍa-darppaṇa-dhvaja) and vṛṣabha.⁷ In an inscription from Cuttack belonging to the tenth century mahāsāmantā-

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1. I.A., IX.126ff 11.23f - Gaṅgā-Yamunā-pālidhvaja-pada(?da)-da(dha)kkā-mahāsabda-cihna-māṇikya-matamga-jādin...
 2. Ekasāṅkha means the best conch.
 3. E.I., IV no.24 11.7-9 - Samāsāditāikaśaṅkhabherīpañcamahāsābdadhavalacohatrahemaśamaravaravṛṣabhalāñchanah...
 4. Gadre, Inscriptions from Baroda, pp.46ff, 55ff; cf. E.I., XXIII.30ff for an identical claim by Gaṇḍarāditya.
 5. E.I., XXX.139f.
 6. It is not clear what precisely a Garuḍa mirror means. We wonder if it refers to a mirror shaped like the figure of the mythological bird Garuḍa or else to a mirror with its handle shaped like that. But we do not understand the association of this mirror with the banner. Probably it was attached to the banner.
 7. Probably the figure of an ox used as the crest.

dhapati Devanandadeva describes in detail his characteristic fly-whisk, umbrella and flag.¹

Muhammad Qāsim was informed by Kāka, an Indian chief, that the Indian mode of bestowing honour upon a feudatory was to grant him a seat in a council, invest him with a garment of silk, and tie a turban round his head.² The Chach-nāma speaks of the first umbrella ~~is~~ of rāṇagī or chieftainship given by Muhammad Qāsim and received by Mokā as consisting of a green umbrella surmounted by a peacock, a chair and a robe of honour.³ Muhammad Qāsim is known to have followed the administrative machinery and customs of India in most of its details.⁴ In the present case he makes a change, replacing the white chattrā by the Muslim colour. The Chach-nāma states that according to the custom of the kings of Hind, he gave to the prefects of the country of Brahmanabad, saddle horses,⁵

1. E.I., XXVII.328ff.

2. Elliot and Dowson I.162.

3. Ibid., 165, 178a.

4. Ibid., 160, 182-5.

5. Cf. Sukranīti, V.162-71 : The master of 10 villages, and the commander of 100 troops should travel on horseback with attendants, the master of 1 village also should be a horseman. The commander of 1,000 troops and the ruler of 100 villages should each have the vehicle of a chariot and a horse and 10 armed attendants or should travel on horseback. The ruler of 1,000 villages should always travel in vehicles carried by men or two horses. The commander of 10,000 troops should travel with 20 attendants on an elephant.
(continued)

and ornaments for their hands and feet and assigned to each of them a seat in great public assemblies.¹ There is a very interesting confirmation of this practice by Medhātithi.² In connection with the consolidation of a conquered territory he observes that along with the leading men the new king should be honoured with ornaments, conveyances, umbrellas, thrones (pīṭhikās) and special kind of crowns (ādarapattabandhas) and other presents. From the Aparājita-prcchā (12th century) it appears that the types of palaces, gates, thrones, crowns etc. for the several grades of feudatories had come to be conventionalised in accordance with specific requirements.³ It is difficult to believe that the sāmantas adhered strictly to these minute requirements. What is, however, significant is the suggestion that the different grades of sāmantas were required to use palaces, crowns and other things according to

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The ruler of 10,000 villages can use all vehicles and four horses. The commander of 50,000 should travel with many attendants. This should be regulated according to the magnitude of the jurisdiction, also in the case of wealthy and qualified people.

1. Elliot and Dowson I.183.

2. On Manu VII.203.

3. LXIX.35-44; LXXVIII.3-7, 32-34; LXXXI.1-4.

their status. The practice obviously goes back to an earlier period. Already in the Mānasāra¹ we find such details about particular types of crowns, thrones etc. to be used by the different ranks of kings which have been postulated in the text.

The feudatories appear always eager to assume titles indicating an independent status. Thus, we find that ~~in~~ towards the period of the decline of the Pratihāra empire some feudatories assumed the title of mahārājādhirāja-paramēśvara to indicate their independent status.² Even when they had to suffer the position of a feudatory they tried to copy the titles of an independent ruler. We find the feudatory kings of the period often adding expressions like paramāheśvara-mātāpitṛpādānudyāta-paramabhaṭṭāraka. This becomes clear especially in the Mahada (Oriss) plates of Someśvaradeva belonging to the close of the twelfth century. Someśvaradeva employs the titles pañcamahāśābdasamanvita, mahamahīmaṇḍaleśvara, mahābhūpatimalla and cakravartin. Here we find an interesting combination of the feudatory title of pañcamahāśābda with

1. XLII, XLIX, XLV.

2. E.I., II.193; III.264ff.

cakravartin assumed by paramount sovereigns. It has been suggested that the titles mahāmāhīmaṇḍaleśvara,² mahābhūpati-malla were deliberate modifications respectively of the feudatory titles of mahmaṇḍaleśvara¹ and mahāvyūhapati¹ used by an earlier member of his family.²

The Rāṣṭrakūṭa dynasty of Vodāmayūta (Badaun) and other feudatories of the Gāhaḍavālas took advantage of the weakness of the Gāhaḍavālas after the defeat of Jayacandra by the Muslim forces at Candwar and declared themselves independent.³

The epigraphs of the feudatory rulers are generally not very different from those of independent rulers. Whereas under the Rāstrakutas and the Cālukyas of Kalyāṇī the conventional formulae employed to describe the rule of semi-independent feudatories are slightly different from those of fully independent kingdoms,⁴ no such marked difference is found in the records of northern India.

1. It is interesting to note that in transforming mahāvyūhapati into mahābhūpati he changed vyūha into bhū thus retaining some phonetic similarity.

2. E.I., XXVIII.284.

3. R.Niyogi, History of the Gāhaḍavālas Dynasty, pp.118f.

4. Yazdani, Early History of the Deccan, p.384; Fleet, Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts, p.428 f.n.4.

Theoretically, the right to grant land belonged to the sovereign king and not to feudal chiefs. We have the testimony of the Mitākṣarā¹ on this point. It was, therefore, usual for feudatories to apply for the permission of their overlords for making a land-grant. Thus, we find that a two land-grants made by a mahāmendalikā and his wife were notified to the officers by the Paramāra overlord.² Likewise, we find that in the Gāhaḍavāla kingdom the land-grant of a rānaka promulgated by the heir-apparent mahārājaputra Govindacandra on behalf of the emperor.³ Sometimes the imperial permission was granted through an officer. Thus, we see that in the Una inscription the land-grant of the feudatory ruler Avanti-varman II was approved by Dhika, the tantrapāla⁴ of Mahendrapāla, the Pratihāra emperor.⁵ In the Partabgarh inscription we find that the Cāhamāna mahāsāmanta Indrarāja had to apply for the permission to grant a village.⁶ The overlord would appear to have enjoyed the right to make a grant of land under

1. On Yāj., I.318 - Anena bhūpatereva bhūmidāne nibandhadāne vādhikāro na bhogapateriti darśitam.

2. E.I., IX no.11.

3. I.A., XVIII.14-19.

4. See infra p.258.

5. E.I., IX.6ff.

6. E.I., XIV.184-87 (Part II 11.14-27). The permission was given by Mādhava, the provincial governor at Ujjain.

his feudatories. Thus, we find a feudatory ruler named Gaṅgadeva making a land-grant as desired by his overlord Jayavarma of the Paramāra dynasty.¹ Likewise, Naravarman, another Paramāra king, donated lands in a village under his feudatory, ^{Rājyadeva.²} In Gujarat we find a village under the feudatory ruler Candragupta being donated by his Rāṣṭrakūṭa overlord Kṛṣṇa II.³ The Tārācaṇḍī rock inscription of mahānaya Pratāpabhavala dated A.D. 1169⁴ denounces a forged grant of two villages secured by bribing an officer of the Gāhaḍavāla² king Vijayacandra. This inscription clearly indicates that an officer of the Gāhaḍavāla king posted in the territory of the feudatory chief Pratāpabhavala was empowered to execute land-grants for villages under the feudatory.

It appears, however, that the feudatories tried to have as little of this restriction as possible. Thus, they wanted to be consulted in case of a land-grant within their jurisdiction. Thus, we see that upto A.D. 821 Karka II of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa family of Gujarat used to put his own signature

1. E.I., IX.120ff.

2. E.I., XX no.11.

3. E.I., I.89.

4. J.A.O.S., VI.547-49.

on his grants. Later on Amoghavarṣa I of the main line would appear to have asserted his authority and in the grants of A.D. 824 and later both he and his feudatories affix their sign-manual.¹ We have many inscriptions in which feudatory rulers make grants of land without any reference to their overlords. Thus, Jasoṛāja donated a whole village along with a hundred acres of land in another village without reference to his Pratihāra overlord.² It appears that even for grants made by the over-lord the signature of the feudatory in whose area the granted lands lay was sometimes considered essential. There is one instance of a feudatory ruler under the Caulukya king Karna zealously exercising this right. As the plates issued by the overlord did not contain his sign he had another set of plates issued which contained his name, too.³

The history of the Nadol kingdom of the Cāhamānas during the reign of Caulukya Kumārapāla⁴ provides concrete illustration of the overlord's right to the territories of his feu-

1. Gadre, Inscriptions from Baroda, pp.28f.
2. Proceedings of All-India Oriental Conference, I pp.325f; I.A., XVIII.84f for a grant by Cāhamāna Vaijalladeva, a feudatory of Ajayapāla.
3. J.B.B.R.A.S., XXVI.258.
4. D.Sharma, Early Chauhan Dynasties, pp.134f.

datories. Ālhaṇa, who was a feudatory of the Caulukyas was driven out of his possessions of Nadol in c. A.D. 1149 by Arṇorāja, the Cāhamāna king of Śākambharī. Kumārapāla later freed Nadol from the Cāhamānas of Śākambharī. He did not, however, restore Nadol to Ālhaṇa. Instead, he gave him Kirātākūpa, Lāṭahrada and Śivā, three towns in Marwar. Originally Kumārapāla appears to have kept Nadol under his direct control. Afterwards he gave it to his daṇḍādhiśa (army chief) Cāhamāna Vaijalladeva. It would appear that some time before A.D. 1161 Kumārapāla transferred Vaijalladeva to another district, probably to Gambhūta-viṣaya, and Nadol was restored to its original occupant Ālhaṇa. The three towns in Marwar which Ālhaṇa had occupied until then were given to Someśvara Paramāra who had hereditary rights to them. Thus, it becomes clear that the overlord could sometimes transfer his feudatories from one estate to another but it is evident that this could not have been the usual practice. In the case of the facts noted above Kumārapāla had to make so many arrangements because of his desire to create effective resistance to Vigha-
rāja IV of the Cāhamāna line of Śākambharī and the strategic position which Nadol occupied in this respect.

The feudatories appear to have had a free hand in their dealings with other feudatories or even with states outside the empire of their overlord. They could wage wars and enter into treaties without consulting their overlords. It is interesting to note that the land-grants of the feudatory chiefs almost invariably mention their own ministers for peace and war by name.¹ The Arabs of Sanjan and the Śīlāhāras of Puri were alike feudatories of the imperial Rāṣṭrakūṭas but they often invaded each other's territories.² In Bengal we read of a feudatory chief named Dommanaspāla waging war against his neighbouring sāmantas.³ We know that Kīrttipāla, the feudatory ruler of Nadol under the Caulukyas, fought successfully against the feudatory Paramāras of Jalor.⁴ In the Lekhā-paddhati we find a document purporting to be the treaty between mahāmaṇḍaleśvara rāṇaka Lavapaśasāda and Yādava ruler mahārājādhirāja Siṃhapadeva. Two verses in the Kavīndra-vacanasaṃuccaya⁵ convey the impression that it was quite usual for feudatory rulers to break the peace, encroach upon each

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1. C.I.I., IV no. 16 ll.15f.
 2. J.N.Banerjee Volume, p.102.
 3. I.C., I.680.
 4. D.H.N.I., II.919, 925.
 5. vv. 177, 209.

other's province and enter into a conflict over boundaries only. Medhātithi¹ no doubt requires a king to ponder over the tendency to peace and war of his māṇḍalikas, but this does not necessarily imply active control by him. It was not usual for an overlord to interfere into feuds between two of his feudatories. We have one instance of such an intervention in the Rājataranginī.² King Kalāśa as the overlord interfered to bring to an end the struggle which arose between Saṅgrāma-pāla and his uncle Madanapāla. In the Prthvīrājarāso³ the feud between two feudal lords Pratāpa Siṃha and Kapaḥa had ultimately to be pacified by the good offices of their overlord king Prthvīrāja himself. From the Harṣa inscription⁴ we learn that the Cāhamāna chief Siṃharāja slew the Tomara chief Salavaṇa and put the allies of the latter either to flight or into prison, where they remained till the common ~~is~~ overlord of Siṃharāja as well as his rivals came over himself to secure their freedom. This common overlord was probably the Prati-

1. On Manu VII.154.

2. VII.533ff.

3. pp. 286ff.

4. I.A., XLII.66ff v.19.

hāra king Vijayapāla.¹

There are not many references to the intervention by the overlord in the internal administration of a feudal chief. It would appear that it was only in cases of grave dispute, which the feudatory could not solve on his own account, that the intervention of the overlord was sought. The Hayunthal grant of Harjara records such a settlement of a dispute within the territory under mahāsāmanta Sucita. The quarrel between boatmen, towers of boats and local feudatories concerned tolls and was settled by a promulgation made by the king.² Normally, the feudatory rulers had the power to frame rules for their areas. Thus, we find that the order of Kumārapāla prohibiting animal slaughter on specified days was enforced by two of his feudatories in their areas with the imposition of fines, which again differed in the two cases. For non-obedience of the order one of the feudatories imposed a fine of four drammas while the other ordered a fine of five drammas on an ordinary person and one dramma on members of royal family.³

1. D.Sharma, Early Chauhan Dynasties, p.29.

2. J.B.O.R.S., 1917, pp. 508-14.

3. Prakrit-Sanskrit Inscriptions (Kāvyamālā series), pp.206f.

We do not have much evidence concerning the official machinery applied by the overlord to keep control over the activities of his feudatories. In the Una inscription¹ dated A.D. 899 we have a reference to a tantrapāla of the Pratihāras stationed in Kathiawar permitting a mahāsāmanta to make a landgrant. We do not get any idea of the other duties of a tantrapāla. It is possible that his position could be compared with the Resident Political Agents of later times. Another possibility is that he was the officer of the overlord in charge of relations with his feudatories. Not all kings, however, used tantrapālas. The Mānasollāsa implies that it was the Minister for Peace and War who normally dealt with the feudatories also. The text requires that this minister should be expert in inviting, receiving, and seating feudatories, especially those deserving special honour². The Kṛtya-kalpataru³ enjoins that in connection with the consecration ceremony the king should send with due respects envoys to his own feudal chiefs and also to other kings. We learn that if any chief showed rebellion or hostility, Chach took a hostage

1. E.I., IX.6ff.

2. Vol. I p.40.

3. Rājadharmā, p.163.

and exacted penalties until the feudatory should amend his conduct.¹

A feudatory who had rebelled against his overlord but was defeated had to suffer many indignities. He was sometimes even compelled to sweep the stables.² From the Kamauli grant of Vaidyadeva³ we learn how the sovereign would displace disloyal feudatories by establishing loyal ones in their place. Kumārapāla is known to have dismissed the Cāhamāna Kaṭudeva of Nadol who was aspiring for independence and appointed a daṇḍanāyaka to administer his principality.⁴ Vikramasimha, the Paramāra ruler of Abu, who was detected when he conspired against the Caulukya king Kumārapāla's life, was deposed and replaced by Yaśodhavalā⁵ who was the nephew of Vikramasimha. The power of escheat residing in the overlord is clear from the Lekhapaddhati. There are many documents announcing the confiscation of the estate of a chief who had not fulfilled his duties, in most cases those of giving military help to

1. Elliot and Dowson I.150ff.

2. E.I., XVIII.248.

3. E.I., II.347f.

4. Majumdar, Chaulukyas of Gujarat, p.254.

5. D.Sharma, Early Chauhan Dynasties, p.52; Kumārapāla-prabandha, p.42.

his overlord.¹ In a Kathākośa² story we read of a king who, when angry, confiscated the villages which he had granted to his father-in-law. From the Upamitibhavaprapaṇcākhā³ it appears that ^{the} sovereign king had the right to confiscate the property of his feudatories but in order to keep good relations with them he was advised not to do so, and to view them as existing from very early times and hence to be respected as being lasting. This right of the overlord to take possession of the assignments of the sāmantas does not appear to have been often enforced and an overlord attempting to do so was sure to face the resentment of nobles. Thus, we find that king Sāmantasimha, who had forfeited the property of the sāmantas, had turned them into his enemies.⁴

It is possible that each king at the time of his accession confirmed his feudatories in their estates. Thus, a mahā-maṇḍaleśvara appointed by Viśaladeva is said to have been subsequently confirmed by Arjunadeva.⁵ It is probably this

1. pp. 23-4.

2. p. 93.

3. Bhavatāpi rājye sthitena....na haraṇīyametośāṃ nara-patīnāṃ
niṣaṃ niṣaṃ yatkimāpi yathārhabhūtyaṃ draśṭavyāḥ sarve'
pyamī purātana-sambhāvanayā.

4. E.I., XVI.349.

5. Poona Orientalist, II.227.

practice that is implied when the feudatory ruler Someśvara claims that the possession of Sindhurājapura, which he obtained back through the favour of Siddhar^āja, was made firm by the favour of Kumārapāla.¹

The great number of the feudatory families spread throughout northern India indicates that the status of a feudatory was hereditary in practice. But the history of the feudatory chiefs of Kakarodikā under the Kalacuri kings of Tripuri indicates that succession in the feudatory family had to be approved by the overlord.² The same appears to have been the case in Kashmir also.³ In a story of the Brhatkathākośa⁴ by Hariṣeṇa the villages which a warrior was granted for his services are said to have been given to another warrior after his death even though he had a son.

It appears that the overlord had many other rights over the person of his feudatories. In feudal societies elsewhere one of the interesting powers of the overlord is the right to give the daughter of his feudatory in marriage to a man

1. Ibid., I.47.

2. I.A., 1888, p.229.

3. Rāj., VIII.2505, 2741.

4. XXXV.2-5.

of his choice. According to a passage in the Brhatkathākośa¹ king Govinda gave Gomatī, the daughter of his chief named Śrīdeva in marriage to another feudatory named Siṃhabala. This example may provide an interesting parallel with European feudalism. This is, however, ~~only~~ the only instance of its kind that we have been able to trace in the records of this period. We cannot, therefore, conclude that the overlord regularly exercised the right to give his consent for marriages of his feudatories.

It should be emphasised that the nature of the relations between the subordinate and sovereign rulers depended upon the comparative strength and size of the two parties. A sāmanta king paid allegiance and dues only as long as the overlord was powerful. On the least sign of the weakness of the empire, the sāmantas tried to shake off the subordination.

We find some of the important obligations of a feudatory mentioned in the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta.² Thus, the border states were made to pay all tributes, obey orders and render personal obeisance. The foreign powers are

1. LXXXVI.1-4. Cf. LXXII.83.

2. Select Inscriptions, pp.254ff.

likewise described as serving Samudragupta by personal visits, offer of a daughter's hand in marriage and requesting for a charter endowed with the Garuḍa seal for the possession of their own territory. By the time of Bāṇa the sāmānta conventions had crystallised further. In his works we can trace many lists of the obligations of a feudatory. Thus, in the Harṣacarita¹ a feudatory is said to waive chowries, with staff in his hands to serve as a door-keeper, to perform obeisance by joining his palms, bowing his head, touching the feet of the sovereign king with his head or putting upon his own head the dust of the overlord, to pay him taxes and to obey his orders.

It was an obligation on the part of the feudatory to mention his overlord in his epigraphs. There are many inscriptions which fulfil this condition. Thus, we find that Yaśovarman, the Candella ruler, indicates his status as a feudatory of the Pratihāras by referring in his Khajuraho inscription of A.D. 953² to Vināyakapāla as ruling over the earth. The feudatories were never slow to take advantage of the weakness of their overlords and indicated their bid for throwing off

1. (Ed. J. Vidyāsagara) pp. 168f.

2. E.I., I p. 129 l. 29 - Srī-Vināyakapāladeve pālayati vasudhām

the control of the overlord by omitting references to their overlords in their records.¹ On the other hand we have the example of Śilāhāra Aparājītaśeva who out of fidelity for the Rāṣṭrakūṭa overlords mentions their genealogy even after the Rāṣṭrakūṭa rule had been overthrown by Tailapa II.² The strong feudatories do not appear to have cared much about referring to their overlords in their records but behaved like independent rulers. Thus, we find that Kelhana of the Cāhamāna family of Nadol who from the Nadlai stone inscription of A.D. 1170³ appears to have acknowledged the supremacy of the Caulukyas does not mention his overlord in most of his inscriptions. On the contrary we find that in his Jhamvera inscription⁴ he assumes the title of mahārājādhirāja generally used by sovereign kings. From the Belkhara pillar inscription⁵ dated A.D. 1197 we learn that rānaka Vijayakarna ruling in the Mirsapur district does not directly mention the Gāhaḍa-vāla king Harīścandra as his overlord but only makes a general

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1. See B.P.Mazumdar, Socio-Economic History, p.26 for some references.
 2. Gadre, Inscription from Baroda, pp.36f.
 3. E.I., XI.47f.
 4. J.A.S.B., 1916, pp.103-4.
 5. Ibid., 1911, pp. 763-5.

reference to the victorious kingdom of Kānyakubja. The invasion by the Muslims had rendered the political situation confusing and as only one year earlier, in A.D. 1196, the neighbouring estates of Bhagwāt and Bhiulī had been conferred upon the ambitious Muslim chief Muhammad-ibn Bakht-yār, Vijayakarna might not have felt political security and hence thought it prudent to avoid a direct reference to his overlord.¹

The feudatory had to be personally present at the court of his overlord especially on ceremonial occasions. From the Mau stone inscription we learn of the presence at the court of the Candella king Sallakṣaṇa of feudatory kings who had come to do him homage.² In the Tilakamañjarī³ the refractory feudal chiefs (duṣṭa-sāmantas) are described as making many excuses when called by the overlord and as absenting themselves from royal ceremonies. The Naiṣadhīyacarita⁴ speaks of the sāmantas assembled on the occasion of Nala's marriage as paying their homage to Nala as he went out of Damayanti's palace and demonstrating their feudatory status by offering their

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1. R.Niyogi, History of the Gāhādavālas, pp.114f.
 2. E.I., I.198 v.10 - raṣṭhāṇa sevāgatānām....cāśritānām.
 3. p.114.
 4. XXI.1-5.

hands to him. On either side they bowed to him, covered the passage with the wreath of their heads as if they thought it was too hard for his feet though overlaid with China-silk tapestries. Rewarded with high honours of being looked upon by him, they quickly offered marvellous jewels brought from their own countries. Like a father, Nala sent them away, after they had been glorified by his increasing queries about their welfare conveyed in words pleasant and true. We have already discussed the participation of the sāmantas in the royal consecration.¹ There are some other references also which speak of the sāmantas as attending the consecration of their overlord and celebrating the occasion with jubilation. Thus, in the Rājataranṅinī² we read of the feudatories of Gulhana attending his consecration. Likewise Candra, the feudatory ruler of Anṅa is said to have spread out among the people the rich collection of materials for the consecration ceremony of his overlord king Madanapala.³

It is but natural that the chief obligation of a feudatory under the tributary system should be that of paying

1. See supra p.243.

2. VIII.3303.

3. Commentary on Rāmācarita, IV.16.

tribute. A verse in the Kavīndravacanassamuocaya¹ speaks of the common obligation of a feudatory king to pay tribute. We learn from the Naiṣadhiya-carita² that strong feudatories often withheld the payment of tribute and the overlord had to resort to war. On the other hand some overlords would have tried to extract the maximum from their feudatories. In the inscriptions we often read of kings receiving kara from their defeated enemies now reduced to the status of feudatories.³ We learn from the Purātana-prabandha-saṅgraha⁴ that Udayasimha, the Cāhamāha ruler of Jalor, demanded tribute from Visala, the Vāghela ruler of Gujarat. It is not unlikely that most of the powerful feudatories were not required to send regular tributes to the overlord. Whenever there was any need and the overlord demanded tributes, sometimes possibly only to evince his right, the feudatory had to pay it. It appears from the relevant references that the feudatories had to pay periodical tributes most probably every year. The Tilakamañjarī⁵ refers to refractory sāmantas not paying the

1. V.211.

2. XI.126.

3. Cf. E.I., I.33ff vv.21-23.

4. p.50.

5. p.114 - prapannamapi pūrvādāyamapracchatam.

dues at proper periods. In the Chach-nāma¹ we also read that during the absence of the overlord on some expedition the nobles and the governors withheld the dues. The same text speaks of annual tribute in terms of cash and horses.² From the Dvyāśrayakāvya³, as explained by Abhayatilaka Gapi, we learn of the annual tribute which Kumārapāla used to receive from his feudatories in Agrahāyana and Mārgaśīrṣa both in cash and kind. The Rājanītiratnākara⁴ of Candēśvara classifies kings according to their obligation to pay tributes. But unfortunately there is not much to help us in determining the mode of the realisation of the tribute, whether the overlord or his envoy went out to collect the sum from the feudatories or it was paid at the time they presented themselves at the court. The Pañcatantra⁵, however, speaks of the envoys from the monarch of the South going to collect yearly tribute from the king of a city and on not receiving the customary honour growing indignant and remarking "Come, king! Pay-day is past, why have you failed to offer the taxes due".

1. I.144f. (Elliot & Dowson)

2. I.152.

3. XVI.61-2.

4. pp.3-5.

5. (Tr. A.W.Ryder) p.85. The text used by Ryder is the Pañcākhyānaka of Pūrṇabhadra (A.D. 1199).

When the overlord was exceptionally weak he could not possibly expect the presents. We have an interesting reference to indicate that a very powerful chief taking advantage of the weakness of his overlord sometimes forced him to part with some of his valuable possessions. Thus, Yaśovarman of the Candella family forced his overlord Devapāla of the Pratihāra dynasty to surrender to him a celebrated image of Vaiṣṇu which the latter had received from the king as a token of his friendship.¹

The feudatory owed to his overlord the important obligation of military service. We have elsewhere² discussed the predominantly feudal composition of the army of a king in this period. In the inscriptions of this period we have many references to feudatories helping their overlords against their enemy.³ This obligation of feudatories is clearly brought out in the historical play Śaṅkha-parābhava Vyāyoga. Bhuvanapāla, a feudatory of Vastupāla, fights for his overlord against the attack of Śaṅkha from Lāṭa. When after his victory Vastupāla was praised by the chief of the bards he

1. R.Niyogi, History of the Gāhaḍavāla Dynasty, p.39.

2. See *supra* pp. 69-103.

3. B.P.Mazumdar, Socio-Economic History, p.27 and n.154.

rightly observes that his own overlord Vīradhavalā should be praised.¹ When the army of Muhammad Ghūrī reached the vicinity of Mount Abu he was opposed by the combined forces of Kelhana, his younger brother Kīrttipāla, Dhārāvārṇa, the Paramāra ruler of Abu and their common overlord the Caulukya king Bhīmadeva II.² The feudatory rulers had to come to the help of their overlord not only against an external enemy but also in suppressing other turbulent feudatories. Thus, we see that Sātaladeva, the chief of Siwana, is said to have rendered many a chief subject to the authority of Kanhaḍadeva, the Cāhamāna ruler of Jalor.³ The feudatory would sometimes conquer new territories on behalf of his overlord or reduce other kings to the position of feudatories of his overlord.⁴ In the Prthvīrājavijaya⁵ the Cāhamāna chief Durlabhārāja I is said to have bathed his sword at the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the ocean and enjoyed the Gauda land. It has been convincingly pointed out by D.Sharma⁶ that this should

1. J.O.I., VII.274.

2. D.Sharma, Early Chauhan Dynasties, p.138.

3. Dewal Rani tr. by M.Habib in J.I.H., 1929, p.377.

4. Poona Orientalist, I p.47.

5. v.20.

6. Loc. cit., pp.24f.

be taken as a reference to the success achieved by the Cāhamānas in Bengal under the banner of their overlord, the Pratihāra king Vatsarāja. In the Chatau stone inscription¹ we have a reference to an expedition of conquest led by Bhaṭṭa, the Guhilot chief, against the kings of the South, most probably the Rāstrakūṭas, at the behest of his overlord, who is generally identified with the Pratihāra king Mahīpāla.

We get valuable information about the legal status of feudatories, their obligation to pay taxes and tributes and their juridicial power from the Rājanītiratnākara² of Candēśvara

1. E.I., XII p.16 v.26.

2. pp. 3-5. A recent study of the subject (B.P.Mazumdar, Socio-Economic History, pp.23-4) draws conclusions from these passages which are not supported by the text. The translation appears to be somewhat careless. He speaks of three classes of ~~sovereigns~~ sovereigns namely samrāt, rājā and adhlāvara but the text really defines three classes of rulers of which only the samrāt was a sovereign ruler, the remaining two being feudatories or tributaries. Further, on he enumerates two varieties of akara-adhlāvaras viz., one who ~~is~~ rules by his own prowess and awards punishments according to his own will and the other who is exempted from payment of tribute by the favour of the emperor. The relevant passage is : Adhlāvaro dvidvidhaḥ sauryādakarah samrād-anugrahād-akarah. Adyah sveccayaiva dandādi dadati dvitīyo'pyanugrahāt. It is clear that both types of akara-adhlāvaras did not pay regular tribute but made occasional presents. This exemption from regular payment was received by some through the favour of the emperor while in others it was a recognition of their power. In the passage quoted above danda does not stand for punishment in general but for taxes or tributes. B.P.

(continued)

Misra. It speaks of three classes of kings - samraj, sakara and akara. A samraj or sakravarin always collects taxes from all kings. The sakara rulers (tributaries) paid regular tributes to the paramount lord every month or every year and were known also as rājan. To the category of akara (literally non-tributary but here denoting semi-tributary) belonged rulers called adhiśvara and also mahārāja who did not pay regular tributes like the sakara ^{rulers} but paid them occasionally according to their will and at the occasion of courtesy visits to the overlord. It will be clear that the akara rulers formed a class of feudatories with only a nominal allegiance to the overlord. The akara or semi-tributary rulers are divided into two sub-classes according to whether they owe their status

continued)

Mazumdar speaking about the two types of sakara-rājās writes, "the first, called the adhikrtadanda has the right to administer criminal justice and their decision is final. But in civil cases there is an appeal from their judgment to the emperor. But these sakara-rājās who are called anadhikrta-danda have the right to administer civil law but have got no power to award ~~judg~~ punishment or no jurisdiction over criminal cases. The civil cases described by them may be referred to the Emperor". But the passage does not support this. There is no reference to civil and criminal cases, and the basis of distinction between the two classes is the right to award punishment.

to their own military valour (śaurya) or to the favour of the paramount lord (samrāḍ-anugraha). Rulers of both these sub-classes alike pay some tributes to the paramount lord. The rulers of the first sub-class do so according to their own will and on pretext of sending envoys (sandeha-vyāja) to appease him. The rulers of the second sub-class pay tribute out of feelings of good-will. The sakara rulers are also of two kinds - those with the power of danḍa etc. (adhikṛta-danḍādīḥ) and those without it etc. (anadhikṛta-danḍādīḥ). We may add that the basis of classification in the case of sakara rulers was not merely the power of awarding punishments in legal disputes. Capdeśvara himself suggests it by using the term ādi (etc.). But he seems to paraphrase danḍa with nyāya. We feel that danḍa stands for royal authority in general. Danḍa is a word of wide connotation and might have included the right to maintain military force as well. The two kinds of sakara rulers had the power to administer justice and appeal against their judgement was reserved for the emperor. But whereas the fines imposed by the first could not be refunded the second sub-class had no power at all to award punishments.

Caṇḍeśvara postulates that in case a ruler of the second sub-class did really award punishments the emperor should impose fines in case of a violent crime (sāhasa) according to the nature of the crime and in cases other than violent crimes (asāhasa) the emperor should express his displeasure by not accepting, when the feudatory approaches him, the present or tributes brought by him and by not granting him an interview for two or three days. Caṇḍeśvara adds, however, that even in this case the emperor should not order for a refund of the fines imposed by the ruler. It would be clear from the description that the akara rulers were without the power to award punishments and formed the numerous class of petty land-lords.

The above survey gives us some idea of the status and obligations of a feudatory. The feudatory^{rulers} actively participated in the most important rites and ceremonies at the imperial court including the consecration ceremony; they had their fixed seats in the court of the overlord, and had their special kinds of emblems and other paraphernalia according to their status. A feudatory, however, always tried to exploit the slightest weakness of his overlord. His right to make

land-grants appears to have been a qualified one, but here also much depended on the relative strength of a feudatory and his overlord and their mutual relations. The overlord does not seem to have interfered with the internal affairs of his feudatories who often seem to have waged wars without consulting their overlords. It was the Minister for Peace and War who dealt with the feudatories, though in some cases a special officer called tantrapāla was appointed to represent the overlord in the territory of a feudatory. It would appear that the overlord also possessed the right of escheat and of marrying the sons and daughters of his feudatory. In practice the possessions of the feudatories were hereditary though they could be transferred and were required to be confirmed by each succeeding emperor.

In view of the paucity of relevant references & it is difficult to make a full-scale comparison of the other aspects of the status of a feudatory vis-a-vis his overlord. But the above discussion would suggest that in its broad outline the picture was not greatly different from that in Europe.

But this should not be taken to mean that there was total identity in details. In India everything remains vague. It is not without significance that none of the works on law or

polity of our period gives any consideration to this subject. The basic difference of Indian feudalism with the European one would seem to be the absence of an oath of fealty. The only reference from India which would appear to have any resemblance to this is about the participation of feudatories in a ceremonial dinner of the emperor, which has been noticed by Abū Zaid and which we discuss elsewhere.¹ This however has to be emphasised that the nature of even this ceremony remains vague and we do not know the details of the obligations which the feudatories thus accepted and whether this meant any corresponding obligation for the overlord.

1. See *infra* pp. 335-37.

CHAPTER X - THE ASSEMBLY OF THE SĀMANTAS

The growing influence of the sāmantas is reflected in the fact that they appear in some cases to have formed a group or assembly of their own and figure as important persons who were consulted on vital issues. Though it would be wrong to say that the sāmantas formed a regular assembly for themselves it is clear that they had some form of even rudimentary group life and asserted themselves on important occasions. This tendency would appear to have started already in the time of Harṣa. The Harṣacarita¹ describes the sāmantas after the death of Prabhākaravardhana as prevailing on Rājyavardhana to accept the throne.

We find that in Europe in the feudal age the chief and almost only origin of actual government for kingdom and barony alike, was the curia - a court formed of the vassals which acted at once and on all matters of judicial as well as legislative and exercised final supervision and control over revenue and administration. As this is an important feature of European feudalism we discuss here all possible references

1. (Cowell and Thomas) pp.168f. The reference does not indicate whether it means all the sāmantas or only those staying at the court of Sthanīśvara.

indicating that the feudatories in India functioned as a group.

The Sukṛta-sankīrtana¹ of Arisimha, a text from Gujarat written in the early years of the thirteenth century and in praise of Vastupāla, a minister of the Vāghelas of Gujarat, gives a reference to a samsad (council) predominantly composed of mandalesas.

In Mithilā, which is known to have preserved some of the traditions of early mediaeval polity unalloyed by Muslim influences up to a late date, there are indications for a body of the feudatories at least in the beginnings of the fourteenth century.² According to K.P. Jayaswal, Gaṇeśvara, one of the uncles of Candēśvara (the author of the Rājanītiratnākara) and a chief of king Harisimhadeva, presided over the council of feudatory rulers of Mithilā.³ According to a verse in the Sugati-sopāna one of the titles borne by Candēśvara was mahā-

1. III. 35.

2. Cf. O'Malley, Gazetteer of Darbhanga, p. 16 : 'On the death of Ramax Singh Deva, his son Sakti Singh, ascended the throne, but his disposition appears to have offended the nobles, and one of his ministers established a council of seven elders as a check upon the autocratic power of the king'.

3. Rājanītiratnākara, Introduction, p. 16.

mahattaka.¹ It would appear that Jayaswal based his view on this title.² This title is found associated with the name of Devāditya, the grandfather of Candēśvara.³

The title appears in the records of other regions also,⁴ which suggests that the assembly of the sāmantas was not quite unknown in early mediaeval period. From the Gāhaḍavāla records it appears that in the reign of Madanapāla the actual administration was in the hands of a regency council consisting of

1. Ibid., pp. 16, 17 f.n. 3 v.5. The title is associated with the name of Ganeśvara also in the oolophon to his Gaṅgā-pattalaka and in the first verse to the introduction of the Chāndogyamantroddhāra composed by his son Rāmadatta - *ibid.*, p.17 f.n. 1. See also *ibid.*, p.19 f.n.1.
2. Mahāmahattaka or mahattaka is not mentioned in any standard modern dictionary or any lexicon of the early mediaeval period. According to Monier-Williams mahattama means greatest, mightiest, most powerful, exceedingly great or mighty or powerful, and mahattara means greater, mightier, stronger, exceedingly great or mighty or strong; the oldest, most respectable, principal, the head or eldest man of the village, courtier, chamberlain. In the Uttarādhyaṇa Tika (3 p.57; 9 p.142a; 18 p.250) a village is said to be under its maya-hara. In the Damodarpur inscription of the reign of Budhagupta (*Select Inscriptions*, pp.324f) the astakulādhikarana is described as headed by mahattara. In the Dasakumāracarita (Kale, p.120) we have a reference to a janapadamahattara who in a subsequent passage is mentioned as rāstra-mukhya (*ibid.*, p.122). On the analogy of grāma-mahattara (Rāmāyaṇa II.83.15; Bṛhatkalpasūtra Bhāṣya 3507) who was the chief among the villagers (see also *Select Inscriptions*, pp.346, 417) we can suggest that mahattaka or the more grandiloquent title mahā-mahattaka was used to designate the chief among the feudatories.
3. Rājānītiratnākara, p.14 f.n.3.
4. Bodhgaya inscription dated in the 74th year of the Lakṣmaṇasena era - E.I., XII p.30.

the crown-prince, the queen, the purohita, the pratihāra and the mahattaka.¹ Thus the Basahi grant of A.D. 1103² was issued by the crown-prince with the consent of the purohita, mahattaka and pratihāra. The Kamauli grant³ too was issued by the crown-prince with the consent of these three personages and the queen. That of these the mahattaka had considerable importance would follow from the Rohan grant dated A.D. 1108⁴ of rānaka Lavarāpravāha which was issued by the crown-prince with the consent of the mahattaka. In this grant the name of the mahattaka is Gāngeya whereas in the earlier one it is Bālhana. This would suggest that either Bālhana had died before A.D. 1108 or had been replaced by Gāngeya, who probably became more influential and ousted Bālhana. The Rewa plates of the time of Candella king Trailokyamalla dated A.D. 1212⁵ mention a certain Malayasimha, the mahāmahattaka and māṇḍalika who was appointed by the king as his minister (mantrin). Here the association of mahāmahattaka with a feudatory ruler (māṇḍalika)

1. R.S.Tripathi, History of Kanauj, p.306.

2. I.A., XIV.101-4.

3. E.I., II.358-60.

4. I.A., XVIII pp.14-19.

5. C.I.I., IV pp. 37ff.

is to be noted. It is interesting to note that the Rewa inscription dated in Kalacuri era 944 (A.D. 1193) mentions one sāmanta Malayasiṃha.¹ In an inscription of the Kalacuri king Vijayasiṃha dated 962 in the Kalacuri era (A.D. 1211) we have a reference to a māṇḍalika Malayasiṃha. If the Malayasiṃhas mentioned in the three records are considered identical as is generally done² we may get interesting details about the career of Malayasiṃha. In the beginning he was an ordinary feudal chief (sāmanta) but later on he rose to become a feudatory ruler or governor (māṇḍalika). He appears to have increased his power among the feudatories and rose to the position of the chief of their assembly (mahāmahattaka). All these phases of his career may be placed during the period when he was under the subordination of the Kalacuris. He soon transferred his allegiance to the Candella king Trailokyamalla who, in recognition of his importance and of the services he might have performed in the clash between the Kalacuris and the Candellas appointed him a minister. In the Edilpur grant of Keśavaśaṇa³ we have a reference to an official styled Gauḍa-

1. C.I.I., IV.350ff.

2. E.I., XXV.1; Mitra, Early Rulers of Khajuraho, p.131.

3. J.A.S.B (N.S) X pp. 99-104, l.64.

mahāmahattaka. That he was one of the highest officials of the king is clear from the inscription which shows that the grant had to pass through the hands of the king's own advisers as well as those of the mahāsandhivigrahika and the mahāmahattaka. The name Gauḍa pre-fixed to the designation mahāmahattaka is interesting. We may suggest that he probably presided over the assembly of the feudatories of the Gauḍa area alone.

In the Vimala-vaśaḥ¹ inscription dated A.D. 1320 Pratāpamalla who belonged to a collateral branch of the Cāhamānas of Jalor is described as respected in the assemblies of rulers (bhūpāla-sadassu mānyah). It is not unlikely that this is a reference to the high position which he occupied on account of his meritorious services among the feudatory chiefs of the Cāhamāna king of Jalor, who may have formed a regular council deliberating important problems in an assembly hall.

We learn of fixed numbers of feudatories associated with some kings of this period. This is significant because the necessity of preserving the actual number of feudatories does not always seem relevant. Moreover, it has to be noted that this could not have been the total number of feudatories under

1. See D.Sharma, Early Chauhan Dynasties, p.174.

these kings because the total is likely to be changed for better or worse with political vicissitudes. It is likely that the recorded number gives the total strength of the feudatories who formed the sāmanta assembly. Thus the Cāḥemāna king Prthvīrāja had 150 feudatories under him,¹ the Kalacuri Karna 136² and the Caulukya Kumārapāla 72.³ In the India Office plate of Lakṣmaṇasena⁴ we have a reference to the hundred councillors ~~headed-councillors~~ headed by the Gauḍa-mahāsandhi-vigrahika Śaṅkaradhara, who most probably formed the sāmanta assembly.⁵ It is to be noted that in the Prabandhacintāmaṇi the seventy-two sāmantas of Kumārapāla are said to have always been found in his company when he was seated in court or went out to another city on a religious visit or to honour an eminent personality. Sometimes these seventy-two sāmantas discussed matters concerning relations with other kingdoms and war.⁶ It is clear that these sāmantas had some form of an

1. Kāmil ut-Tawārikh in Elliot and Dowson, II.251.

2. Prabandhacintāmaṇi, p.49 ll.50-52.

3. Ibid., p.81 ll.11f, p.87 ll.28-30, p.93 l.2.

4. E.I., XXII p.13.

5. Prabandhacintāmaṇi, p.81 ll.11f, p.87 ll.28-30, p.93 l.2.

6. Kumārapāla-carita (N.S.P., 1900), Introduction, pp. xii-xiii.

organisation, probably working through an assembly.¹ We are, however, totally ignorant about the manner in which they functioned and the rules which guided them. It is, however, tempting to see in them an organisation similar to that of the forty amirs of Sultan Iltutmish.

The Aparājitasprechā² would support these references. It envisages fixed numbers for different categories of feudatories who attended the royal court (sabhā). It is obvious that all the feudatories could not be present all the time at the court. It appears that the number mentioned in the text were required to be always present at the court, otherwise there does not appear to be much justification for the text enumerating the specific numbers. This would look like an assembly of the feudatories and chiefs of the empire. The list is as follows :-

(a) <u>Maṇḍalesas</u>	4
(b) <u>Māṇḍalikas</u>	12
(c) <u>Mahāsāmantas</u>	16
(d) <u>Sāmantas</u>	32

1. In the Aucityavicāracarāṇā, p.18 we have a reference to an assembly-hall of the sāmantas (sāmantāsthāna). The reference suggests that it was a part of the court where the sāmantas sat. We are not sure if it was used by the sāmantas for their deliberations also.

2. p.196 vv.33-4.

- (e) Laghu-sāmantas 160
 (f) Caturamśikas 400
 (g) Rājaputras who were numerous.

In the epigraphic and literary works of the period we often find references to the cakra (circle) of the sāmantas. We suggest that in some cases, at least, it did not stand for the mere totality of the feudatories but denoted an organised body or group of them.¹ In any case it would appear that cakra had some technical sense in these references. It is to be noted that in all these references, epigraphic and literary, we do not find any other term signifying group or collection even though there was no necessity to use it on grounds of the requirements of metre. It would appear that for the corporate body of the sāmantas cakra was the special term which was in use. Thus according to the Prabodhacandrodaya Gopāla, a feudatory of Candella Kīrtivarman, was called sakala-

1. Monier-Williams, Sanskrit English Dictionary explains cakra to mean the wheel, a circle, a form of military array, the wheel of a monarch's chariot rolling over his dominions, sovereignty, realm. But Macdonell, A Practical Sanskrit Dictionary also gives multitude, host, flock, troop as the meaning of the term. Apte, Practical Sanskrit English Dictionary too mentions cakra as meaning a troop, multitude, collection, an army, a host.

¹
sāmanta-cakra-ōdāmaṇi (the crest jewel of the cakra of the sāmantas). The commentary to the Rāmacarita ² also refers to the cakra of the numerous sāmantas joining together (militā-nanta-sāmantacakra) in connection with the uprising against Mahīpāla II. In the Tilakamañjarī ³ too we have a reference to the presence of the sāmanta-cakra on the battle-field. The Bhaviṣṣayattakahā ⁴ also speaks of the entire cakra of the sāmantas (asesa-sāmanta-cakku) as present at the court. The suggestion is clearer in the case of a certain sāmanta named Sarvanāga who makes no reference whatsoever to his overlord but claims that he had evinced his qualities eminently in the cakra of the sāmantas (sāmanta-cakra-prakṣatara-guṇaḥ) ⁵. We may here take note of the suggestion that cakra is rather a modification of the ancient concept of a maṇḍala without implying

1. Bose, History of the Candellas, p.132. If in the present case cakra is used to refer only to the totality of sāmantas the word sakala appears to be redundant. The use of sakala and cakra side by side would indicate that cakra had some special significance. A similar use of cakra in association with asesa is noticed above in the Bhaviṣṣayattakahā. Cf. the expression samasta-rāja-cakra-samsevita-carana applied to Govindacandra. See R.Niyogi, History of the Gahadavala Dynasty, p.86.

2. I.31.

3. p.86.

4. I.A., XIV pp.45f.

4. XIV.6-7. See also Udayasundarikathā, p.24 - prasādenābhī-nandya kramāgatamanujīvisāmantacakram.

that the members of the cakra formed a kind of corporate body. This latter suggestion is not supported by the commentary on the Rāmacarita. This source¹ speaks of Rāmapāla as crushing the Kaivarta rebellion with the help of his sāmanta-cakra and recovering his ancestral dominions and goes on to enumerate the names of the prominent feudatories who formed Rāmapāla's sāmanta-cakra which stood by his side on the occasion and adds that there were other sāmantas² also who are omitted because they were not important. It is to be noted that if sāmanta-cakra was the ancient concept of maṇḍala now formed of feudatories there would not have been any sense in only some of the feudatories forming it. It would follow that it was some organisation of the sāmantas to which only a few sāmantas were admitted because of their power and prestige, whereas there were many others who did not form the cakra. It is interesting to note that in this list of feudatories constituting the sāmanta-cakra, there is mentioned a certain Lakṣmī-Sura, the ruler of Aparā-Mandāra, who is described as samanta-āṭavika-sāmanta-cakra-cūdāmaṇi³. It would appear that

1. On I.42-5.

2. On II.5-6.

3. Ibid.

besides an assembly of sāmantas in general there was a particular one for the forest feudatories. The separate existence of an assembly for a particular section of the sāmantas might have been due to the high importance it had come to occupy. This may appear likely from a reference in the same commentary,¹ which states that before undertaking his second expedition against his opponents Rāmapāla visited the principal feudatories and in particular won over the sāmantas of the forest regions. Another possibility is that there were separate assemblies for the different types or sections of the sāmantas while the general assembly of the sāmantas was constituted of the more important sāmantas of the different sections. We cannot hazard any suggestion on the system according to which the sāmantas constituting the general assembly were elected or selected from their respective assemblies. It seems, however, likely that these sāmantas achieved this distinction as a recognition of their influence and military strength. We do not postulate a system of regular democratic elections and the sāmantas getting the right to represent the assemblies of their own section in the general assembly. Probably the emperor

1. On I.43ff.

used to nominate them to the general assembly in view of their military strength.

We learn from bardic Ballads found in the Prthvirāja Rāso, Paramāla/Rāso and the Ālhā Rāso that before setting out to attack Mahoba, the capital of Paramāla (Paramardideva), the Candella king, Prthvirāja Cāhamāna took counsel with all his chiefs.¹ Likewise we learn that when Prthvirāja, the Cāhamāna king, reached the vicinity of Mahoba the capital of the Candella king, a council of the chiefs was convened and it was decided on the suggestion of the chief queen to seek for a temporary truce for a couple of months.²

Though the system of the sāmanta assembly might not have crystallised into^a powerful institution[†] everywhere in northern India it is clear that the sāmantas had come to be regarded as important councillors to be consulted on important issues. In the Bṛhatkathakosā we often meet the expression sāmanta-mantrinah, which may be translated either as 'sāmanta councillors' or as 'sāmantas and ministers'. In one place³ at least

1. E.I., XX.127 - mahāsāmanta-rājaputra-vandita-pādaḥ.

2. Mitra, Early Rulers of Khajuraho, p.122. Also N.S.Bose, History of the Candelas, p.188.

3. LVI.334 - sāmantamantrinō mukhyā antahpuramahattarāḥ.

the first suggestion would suit the construction better. In any case it is clear from this reference that the council of the sāmantas was an important factor in the state. In this story sāmanta-mantrins are those mentioned first among those deliberating after the death of the king. The meaning of sāmanta-mantrin suggested by us is supported by the colophon of a manuscript from Pattan dated A.D. 1170 which refers to the rule of a sāmanta-mantrin over an administrative division called pathaka.¹ We feel that the expression sāmantāmātyakāḥ found in the Mānasollāsa at many places² means feudatories functioning as councillors. It is significant to note that Sodḍhala in his Udayasundarikathā³ maintains a difference between the mantrins and the sāmantas and observes that while the king discussed with his mantrins the conduct of ideal kings

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1. Catalogue of Manuscripts at Pattan I p.105 - sāmantamantrinī Valēdraka-pathakam paripanthayatityevam kāle pravarttamāne.
 2. II p.104 v.1206 - mandalādhiśvarāḥ sūrah sāmantāmātyakā ap1. B.P.Mazumdar, Socio-Economic History of Northern India, p.21 translates sāmantāmātyakas as feudatory-princes and their ministers. It is not clear on what grounds he bases this translation. If the expression is treated as a Dvandva compound it would mean feudatory princes and ministers. We find no justification for taking amātyakas here as referring to ministers of feudatory rulers.
 3. p.27.

of past such as Pṛthu, Bharata and Bhagīratha, he deliberated the actions of turbulent enemies with the sāmantas.

A natural question which arises in this connection is how did the council of the sāmantas originate. We find that some form of a council played an important part in administration from a very early date. Even in the Vedic literature we meet sabhā and samiti¹. In the Maurya period we are on a surer ground about the existence of some form of a council of ministers (mantri-pariṣad). The Arthasāstra² envisages three types of arrangements, a small cabinet of three or four ministers, a council of ministers, eight or more according to the requirements and a larger number of superintendents or high officers connected with various departments. That the references to the pariṣad in the Arthasāstra are not a pious speculation of a theorist but reflect the actual administrative machinery of the Maurya period will follow from the third and sixth Rock Edicts of Aśoka which refer to the pariṣā as issuing out orders to the officers designated as yutas or yuktas. The Mālavikāgni-mitra, whose plot relates to the period immediately after the

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1. Vedic Index, II.427; U.N.Ghoshal, Studies in Indian History and Culture, pp.349ff; R.S.Sharma, Aspects of Political Institutions, pp.63ff; K.P.Jayaswal, Hindu Polity, Part I p.11
 2. I.15.

decline of the Mauryan empire, also testifies to the existence of the mantri-parisad. We learn from this drama¹ that the decision of Puṣyamitra to establish a dvairājya is conveyed to the mantri-parisad and then the amātya, who probably served as the President of the council being the chief minister, informs him about the council agreeing with him, whereupon Puṣyamitra asks the council to depute senāpati Vīrasena to carry out the proposal. The epics also suggest that the kings used to discuss and decide lines of policy in the midst of their mantrins.²

We cannot trace the stages through which the assembly of the sāmantas came to evolve. It may, however, be suggested that it was some kind of continuation of earlier councils such as the ancient sabhā and the mantri-parisad of later times. Feudalisation of the state apparatus may have gradually led to feudatories assuming the function of royal officials and with their growing importance in the empire they probably came to be consulted on important issues.

The above survey makes it clear that we do not get evidence to suggest regular assemblies of sāmantas like the curia

1. Ch. V.

2. Mbh., XII.185.41; XII.83.47; Rāmā, II.100.18, 71.

of European feudalism in all the kingdoms of the early mediaeval period. Further, the available references indicate that the rudimentary form of the assembly of the sāmantas was associated mostly with big empires and sovereign kings. We have no clear evidence to show that the assemblies functioned even under the bigger feudatories. The possibility, however, cannot be entirely ruled out because even the small state of Mithilā, which shows several early mediaeval institutions, had such an assembly. But we very much doubt if these assemblies existed under smaller feudatories. Moreover, though the sāmanta assembly can be said to have deliberated over all the important problems of the kingdom, we do not have anything to suggest that they had any legal status of the type the curias had in Europe. It would appear that they mostly concerned themselves with questions of waging war or making alliances with other states and of maintaining the peace in the kingdom. There is no reference to suggest that the sāmanta assembly served as judiciary and legislature or supervised any control over revenue collection and administration. Our sources are equally silent about the rules governing the working of the sāmanta assemblies. We again do not find indica-

tions to suggest that the sāmanta assembly had any real executive function. It was an advisory board, and it was open to the king to accept its advice, though in practice, especially when the king did not possess much military power, he had to rely on the sāmanta assembly.

CHAPTER XI - FEUDAL IMPACT ON THE TAXATION-SYSTEM

The feudalisation of state structure vitally affected the taxation system. The system became complex and thus increased the weight and burden of the taxes which the people had to bear. In a feudal society with many grades of rulers superimposed one upon another the number of the claimants to tax increased, which ultimately was bound to affect the total burden on the tax-paying classes. The different grades of rulers tried to exact enough money not only to support themselves but also to meet the demands of their immediate lords. It is not known how many strata of feudatories there were in actual practice but we can form some idea of sub-infeudation in the period from stray references which have survived. Thus, an inscription dated A.D. 1197¹ mentions a rāuta under his immediate lord a rānaka and the sovereign lord, the king of Kānyakubja, i.e. the Gāhaḍavāla ruler. The Ratanpur stone inscription of the time of the Caulukya king Kumārapāla² implies a longer chain of rulers. We learn from this inscrip-

1. J.A.S.B (N.S), VII.763.

2. P.Peterson, Collection of Prakrit and Sanskrit Inscriptions, p.206.

tion that under Kumārapāla Naddūla-maṇḍala was being ruled by mahārāja-bhūpāla Rājyapāla to whom owed allegiance Pūnapākṣa, a chief of 84 villages, who in his turn had certain ṭhakkuras as his feudatories. Instances of chains of rulers and of sub-infeudation from different parts of northern India can be multiplied from epigraphic records. This tendency is reflected in the Lekhapaddhati¹ also. Among the specimen documents of different kinds of charters we have a charter of a king recording the grant of to a rāṇaka of a deśa which, as we have seen elsewhere,² is sometimes used to refer to a maṇḍala. Another document found in the Lekhapaddhati in this very context is a charter recording the grant of a village by a rāṇaka to a rājaputra.

As we have seen elsewhere,³ the feudatories were required to pay either occasional tributes or fixed periodical dues. But there is some evidence which indicates that at the local level the tax-collecting rights of the king and those of his petty chiefs were sometimes not exclusive so that the farmer

1. p.7.

2. See *supra* pp. 187-88.

3. See *supra* pp. 266-68.

had to pay double taxes. Thus, it would appear from a reference in the Dvyāśraya-kāvya¹ that after the harvest was over in autumn a share of the produce was taken by the grāma-pati (village lord) and another share by the king. It is interesting to note that the Bṛhat-Parāśara² also speaks of a cultivator as paying the separate shares of the village chief (grāmeśa) and the ruler (nṛpa).

In the epigraphic records of this period we find terms such as akṣapaṭala-prastha and pratīhāraprastha in the Gāhaḍavāla inscriptions,³ cauroddharapa in the inscriptions from Bengal,⁴ duhsādhya and pattakilāḍya in the Kalaouri grants⁵ and talārābhāva in a Guhila inscription.⁶ As we have seen elsewhere, these terms refer to the dues which the villagers had to pay to the officers whose names are prefixed to the terms denoting the dues. These are new terms which appear in the records of the early mediaeval period and represent a

1. III.2.

2. (Jivananda) III p.113.

3. R.Niyogi, History of the Gāhaḍavāla Dynasty, p.167. See *supra* pp. 147ff

4. U.N.Ghoshal, Hindu Revenue System, p.243.

5. C.I.I., IV no.63. See *supra* p.147.

6. Collection of Prakrit and Sanskrit Inscriptions, p.158.

characteristic feature of the taxation system of the period. It would seem that the claims of the official nobility must have been a new burden on the tax-paying classes. In the Candella inscriptions¹ we often find a stereotyped expression containing the order of the donor king enjoining the state servants, the forest officers² and the cāṭas to relinquish their respective claims in favour of the donee. It would follow that these groups had some formal and conventional rights over villages, which obviously added to the burdens of the villagers. We can form some idea of the pressure on the resources of the poor villager which these official privileges meant if we keep in mind the fact that freedom from the interference of the cāṭas and bhaṭas is repeated in all the land-grants ~~of~~ with a uniform boredom. An inscription from Sungal in the Chamba state³ indicates the nature of some of the exactions which the villagers suffered at the hands of petty officers such as cāṭas and bhaṭas. These had a formal right to alight at a villager's house, to cut or crush his corn, sugarcane or pasture, whether green or ripe, to take rocika-

1. E.I., XVI no.2.

2. Atavikas is generally translated to mean wild tribes or foresters. But we suggest that the term probably refers to state officers in charge of forests.

3. Vogel, Antiquities of Chamba State, no.15 ll.22-24.

ciṭolā or to take cows-milk, to carry off his stools, benches or couches, to seize his wood, fuel, grass, cheff and so on.

Besides these officers legally entitled to some dues from the villagers we have indications to suggest that taking advantage of the anarchy due to the weakening of the central authority a class of chieftains had grown up who also in some form realised some taxes from the villagers making the burden of taxes still heavier for the villagers. Hemacandra in his Deśīnāmamālā¹ uses the term grāmaroḍā and koḍio and explains them as meaning persons who enjoy villages by deceitful manipulation. It would appear that these represented a class of chieftains who were not recognised by the lawful authorities of the time but collected taxes over and above those levied by the legally authorised agencies.

The feudatories needed money not only to pay the tributes to their overlord but also to maintain a strong army which was very important in view of the internecine wars and struggles which^{were} the order of the day during most of our period, especially in the tenth and twelfth centuries, and also to meet

1. II.48, 90.

the lavish expenses on show and grandeur which they imitated from the high kings and which, they thought, raised their prestige. The expenses on the army were necessary for the very existence of the kingdoms and in those troubled times ambitious chiefs needed them to increase their own territories and power. All this naturally influenced the taxation system and rendered it more burdensome. An interesting confirmation of this tendency is to be found in a reference in the Vikramāṅkadeva-carita¹. We learn that the brother of king Vikrama of the Cālukya dynasty was his feudatory, but wanted to increase his army so that he might be successful in his rebellion against his brother, the overlord. With that end in view he is said to have resorted to questionable ways of financial extortion and amassed a treasure by oppressing his subjects.

Hereⁿ we may investigate the position as regards the rights and privileges of the feudatories to realise taxes. It appears that even the smaller feudatories, feudal lords or chiefs had full rights to realise all the existing taxes, to make changes in them by altering the amount to be levied and

1. Sarga XIV.

also to introduce new imposts, if and when they thought it necessary. It is to be emphasised that in the religious grants the donees were given the right to realise all the taxes which hitherto were paid to the state. This is clear not only from the specific enumeration of the items of revenue but also from the clauses which require the cultivators to pay to the donee the taxes and dues which they had paid to the donor king. These grants are addressed to officers who are required to see that the donees are not disturbed in their enjoyment of their revenue. Sometimes the donor enjoins the future rulers of his own family and also others not to interfere with the donees enjoying the revenue. Now, as we have pointed out elsewhere,¹ the secular grants were fashioned after the religious grants. It is, therefore, likely that a similar right to realise all the taxes was granted even in the case of secular grants also. As has been rightly pointed out by Professor R.S.Sharma,² some of the grants of our period, which are presented in the form of religious grants, were not for religious merit but were made out of secular considerations. We

1. See supra pp. 52, 140.

2. J.E.S.H.O., IV.82ff.

have very clear evidence on this point in the land-grants which were made to a kṣatriya rāuta named Rājyadharavarman in the Gāhaḍavāla kingdom.¹ These grants follow all the formalities which we notice in a religious grant. Thus we can safely conclude that like the religious grants, ^{the secular grants} also contemplated a transfer of the right to the revenues.

That the feudatories had the same fiscal rights as those enjoyed by their overlords follows from the grants made by the feudatories. In these records we find that the feudatories enumerate all those taxes which are found in a charter issued by a sovereign king. To illustrate our point² we may cite the Malga (Sahadol) plates of sāmanta Indrarāja belonging to the first half of the seventh century A.D, an inscription dated A.D. 893 of the time of Mahendrapāla I recording a grant by his Cālukya feudatory Balavarman,³ the Partabgarh inscription (A.D. 946) of Mahendrapāla II about a grant made by his feudatory Mādhava,⁴ the grants made by Devānandadeva, a feuda-

1. I.A., XVIII.134-43; E.I., IV.111-12.

2. E.I., XXXIII.211ff.

3. E.I., IX pp. 4-6.

4. E.I., XIV.184-87.

tory chief in Orissa,¹ those of Jayabhata IV,² the Sone-East-Bank copper plate grant of mahāmāṇḍalika Udayarāja³, the Kamauli plate of mahārājaputra Vatsarāja belonging to the Singara family⁴ and the grant made by rānaka Lavarāpravāha.⁵ It goes without saying that the very fact that these feudatories could grant these revenues implies that they originally possessed the right to enjoy them.

From the literary as well as the epigraphic records of this period we get ample evidence to prove that new ways of taxing the people were being used and the feudal chiefs resorted to oppressive measures. The Vastupālacarita records a tradition about a māṇḍalika who extracted heavy presents and bribes from the people and plundered the merchants.⁶ The account of the career of Lakṣmaṇa, the founder of the Cāhamāna dynasty of Nadol, as given in the Purātanasrabandha-saṅgraha⁷ and the Nānsi's Khyāt,⁸ though containing supernatural

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1. E.I., XXVI.78ff; XXVII.328ff. The records do not contain a specific reference to the overlord and it is difficult to determine from other sources.
 2. C.I.I., IV.96ff, 102ff.
 3. E.I., XXII.227ff.
 4. E.I., IV.131ff.
 5. I.A., XVIII.14ff.
 6. p.100.
 7. pp.101f.
 8. I p.152 q. by D.Sharma, Early Chauhan Dynasties, pp.120f.

elements, appears credible enough and may well represent the behaviour of a typical feudal chief of the period. D.Sharma¹ convincingly interprets these traditions to show that Lakṣmaṇa did ~~not~~ rob some caravans of all their horses and that his looting expeditions, whose field probably included the confines of Mewar as well as Gujarat, were glorified into the bardic story that Lākṣhā collected the transit duties at the further barrier of Pattan and levied tribute from the prince of Chittore. The Udayasundarikathā of Sodḍhala² also indicates that feudal chiefs often used oppressive and questionable means to raise money. In this text we have a reference to a feudal chief belonging to the royal family, who used to imprison rich people for extracting money from them. It was considered usual for feudal chiefs to resort to new and strange items of taxation. The Latakamelaka of Sankhadhara belonging to our period ridicules the strange ways of feudal chiefs for finding out new sources of revenue. This subject is unusual for the literary traditions of classical Sanskrit literature and suggests that the Latakamelaka selected for

1. Op. cit., pp. 121-22.

2. p.56 - kadācidbandīgrhītvā śrīmadbhyah.

ridiculing a social evil which was widely rampant in its period. Saṅgrāma-*visara*, one typical character of society represented in this work, is a rājaputra chief (rāutterāja), who enjoys the assignment of a village (grāma-paṭṭaka). He is represented as saying that he made money even from the sparrows, dead birds, pig dung and the shrouds of dead bodies.¹

A study of the inscriptions also suggests that the feudatories were always trying to find new ways to increase the amount of the taxes. In the inscriptions of the period we often find new terms denoting new forms of taxes. Thus, in connection with the revenues assigned to a temple besides the common ones, Mathanadeva, a feudatory chief under the Pratihāras of Kanauj, mentions the terms mayūta, khalabhikṣā, prasthaka, skandhaka, mārggaṇaka and naṣṭibharata.² In two land-grants made by feudatories of Mahendrapāla in the Kathiawar area we have the new tax called collaka.³ In some inscriptions from Assam⁴ we find references to oppressive taxes, such

1. Act II p.18.

2. E.I., III no.36.

3. E.I., IX no. 1 (A and B).

4. U.N.Ghoshal, Hindu Revenue System, p.248. Cf. E.I., XXXII no.33 ll.42f.

as those imposed on the fasting^{on} of elephants (hastibandha) and the moving of boats (naukābandha), the tracking of thieves (cauroddharapa), the arrest of criminals (daṇḍapāśa), the uparikara tax, the utkhetana impost for various occasions (nananitta^{mi}) and the grazing of elephants, horses, and other animals. The Kalacuri records sometime refer to the grant of a tax of unknown meaning called ardhapuruṣārikā¹. In some of the land-grants of Cedi and Candella kings we find the revenue terms akāśotpatti and kalyāṇadhana². U.N.Ghoshal³ leaves these terms unexplained. But we suggest that kalyāṇadhana may refer to the presents or nazarānā of modern usage which villagers pay to the village chief from time to time. The term akāśotpatti means produce of the sky and suggests that the kings and chiefs were always trying to levy taxes on all possible items. The Gāhaḍavāla records beat all other records for references to new and strange revenue terms⁴. In some of the inscriptions from Orissa we find many revenue terms some of which indicate that they were mostly of the⁵

1. J.A.S.B., VIII.492.

2. Hindu Revenue System, pp.254f.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., pp.261ff.

5. E.I., XXXIII.266ff; XXVIII.324ff.

nature of feudal exactions on a number of pretexts.¹

In the Caulukya inscriptions we find among the list of revenues the terms navamārgganaka and navanidhāna.² U.N. Ghoshal³ suggests that the original imposition of this kind had become permanent and that an additional levy was made at this time. It would therefore appear that sometimes the rulers did not hesitate to double the amount due on any item of tax on the flimsy argument that there was a need for that.

Two inscriptions from the Caulukya kingdom indicate the rights enjoyed by the feudatories. At the same time they reveal how the feudatories were not slow to take advantage of all possibilities and opportunities to increase the burden of taxation. It is well known that king Kumārapāla out of sincere religious convictions prohibited the killing of animals on certain days of a month. It is obvious that he had no monetary desires behind this act but we learn from the records ~~that~~ of his feudatories that they converted this also into a means of income. We learn that one feudatory, who was a chief of 84 villages, laid down a fine of 4 drammas on a

1. E.g., vandāpanā, viṣayavandāpanā, hasti-danda and haladanda.

2. U.N. Ghoshal, Hindu Revenue System, p. 256.

3. Ibid.

a person who disobeyed the orders prohibiting the killing of animals.¹ Another chief Ālhanadeva imposed a fine of 5 drammas if the defaulters were ordinary people but only 1 dramma if they belonged to the royal family. In the second record the rule was extended to include potters, who were made liable to fine in case they made pots on the days prohibited for killing animals.²

In some of the inscriptions of the period we find long lists of specific dues which were assigned to temples. We feel that these items were not the usual dues which the donor king or chief used to realise but seem to have been added to those already existing. If they had been the customary dues there was not much sense in giving long lists of charges mentioned in each specific case. Moreover, as we shall see, some of the items seem to have been new ones, which could not have been covered by the usual dues in force. This would mean that these were additional imposts which the already overburdened tax-payer had to bear. Thus, in the Arthuna inscription of the Paramāra chief Cāmuṇḍarāja dated A.D. 1078 the

1. Prakrit and Sanskrit Inscriptions, pp.206f.

2. Ibid., pp.172f.

taxes assigned to a temple of maṇḍaleśvara Mahādeva are ¹ : -

On each bharaka (pack) of candid^e sugar and jaggery belonging to the traders - one varṇikā.

On each bharaka of Bengal madder, thread and cotton - 1 rūpaka.

On every bharaka of coconuts - 1 fruit.

On each mūṭaka (bullock-load) of salt - 1 mānaka.

From every thousand araca-nuts - 1 nut.

On every ghāṭaka (a measure of liquid things) of butter and sesame oil - 1 pālikā.

On each koṭikā of clothing fabric - 1½ rūpakas.

On every jāla - 2 pūlakas (bundles).

For each house of the traders in the local bazar - 1 dramma on the Caitra festival of sacred thread.

On the shops of braziers - 1 dramma per month.

On each vumvaka of distillers - 4 rūpakas.

On every house of the whole population - 1 dramma.

On the gambling-house - 2 rūpakas.

On each lagadā² - 2 santas.

1. E.I., XIV no. 21.

2. Ibid., p.309 f.n.12. It may be connected with Marathi lagad meaning a frame of wood or iron in which pitchers are carried upon beasts, and Gujarati lagadum meaning a coarse bag put on an ass in which the burden is placed.

On each karsa of oil - 1 panaka.

On each load of cattle-fodder - 1 vṛṣa-vimśopaka.

On each trader's association (vanig-maṇḍalikā) - 1 dramma.

(The fourteenth day of the bright fortnight i.e. the full-moon day is attached to every occurrence)

On a pile¹ of sugar - 1 dramma.

On a water-wheel - 1 hāraka (handful) of barley.

On a clear² 20 (packs) of loaded grain - 1 bharaka.

On a bharka^a (of the same) - 1 chaṅga³.

From each lagaḍā - 1 citron.

From a mūṭaka (bullock-load) of barley - the vāpa (a handful).

Here it should be noticed that besides taxes on commodities the inscription imposes levies on houses, shops and, what is more significant, on a trader's association.

Likewise we find that a certain thakkura Mūluka of the Guhila family ruling at Mangrol (A.D. 1146) under king Kumāra-

1. Tavanin may be connected with Marathi tavanā meaning the heap of sugarcane as cut for the mill - E.I., XIV p.310 f.n.2.
2. The expression used is śuddha-vimśatī which means that any number less than 20 was not liable to this tax.
3. The meaning of the term is not known.

pāla assigns the following taxes to a temple¹ : -

From the customs house (śulka-maṇḍanikā) of Śrī Maṅgalapura -
1 kāṣāpana per day.

From the revenues of talāra - 1 kāṣāpana per day.

On every manaka taken from the pannier of a pack-bullock -
1 kāṣāpana.

On every cart-load of grain - 4 kāṣāpanas.

On every pannier of a donkey - $\frac{1}{2}$ kāṣāpana.

On every bundle of betel leaves and on every viḍaharā, kerī,
vāṭuyā and the like - $\frac{1}{2}$ kāṣāpana.

On every camel-load of betel leaves - 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ kāṣāpanas.

On every cart laden with betel leaves - 1 dramma.

On every field yielding the best crop - 1 kāṣāpana.

On every khunṭi, kharālī and hānsā in a salt-pan - $\frac{1}{4}$
kāṣāpana.

(In the same manner to be taken in Coruyāvāḍa and Valaijā)

From the transit duties collected at the customs house on
the road to Lāṭhivadra - 1 silver piece to be given by ṭhakkura
Śrī Mūluks.

1. Collection of Prakrit and Sanskrit Inscriptions, pp.158ff.

From the customs house at Vāmaṇasthalī - 1 kārsāpāna per day.

On gambling - 1 kārsāpāna every day.

On every bundle in a betel leaves shed - 100 betel leaves.

• On every vīḍaharā, kerī, vātuyā and the like - 50 betel leaves.

From every shop of a betel leaf seller on one unhusked betel-nut - 2 betel leaves per day.

We can very well see the existing tendency as regards the feudal imposts from the entry regarding the tax imposed on every field yielding the best crop. It goes without saying that the field producing the best crop must have been paying the regular taxes and the present cess aimed at extracting money out of the higher profits which the owners of such a field had.

It would appear that the kings did not prevent the feudatories from applying their high-handed system of taxation. Probably the feudalisation of the political structure had gone very much ahead and as the kings depended on the feudal levies they could not interfere with the rights of their feudatories to impose taxes. On the other hand it may appear

that they acquiesced in this state of affair by recognising its existence. This would follow from the fact that in some records of our period the lists of taxes granted often are found having the expressions ucitānucita, niyatāniyata and bhaviṣyat. These, thus, tacitly sanction the possibility of the kings and chiefs introducing some new taxes in the future, a few of which may even turn out to be unjust and oppressive.

CHAPTER XII - CODE OF CHIVALRY AND FEUDAL CUSTOMS

A feudal society is often found associated with traditions of chivalry. Such a society includes an order of class of warriors or knights with high ideals. Chivalry inculcates virtues such as limitless valour, truth-speaking, troth to one's liege, extravagant generosity, romantic love of woman and devotion to religious institutions.¹ In India traditions of chivalry appear to have been very old. The society reflected in the epics, especially the Mahābhārata, would seem to be one wedded to chivalric ideals. Some of the chivalric practices can be traced back earlier, sometimes even to the Vedic society. In India the chivalric ideals received their strength and permanence through the caste system which envisages a distinct group of men of arms devoted to the protection of society and directed by high ideals of noble conduct.

In mediaeval times certain forms of chivalry gained force and became wide-spread. The prevailing anarchy and need for protection coupled with the life of a feudal chief in the closed or self-sufficient economy of cities and villages

1. H.O. Taylor, The Mediaeval Mind, I pp. 563-70.

provided the background for its efflorescence. The existence of bards and of the priestly class which often foster chivalry were also present here.

The code of conduct which a chivalrous hero was expected to follow is often found in connection with the enunciation of ksātradharmā. Sometimes we also have references to acts worthy or unworthy of a hero called vīra or sūra. We can do well to take a note of these in order to get an idea of the conventions which governed the life of a feudal warrior.

His honour was the one thing most dear to a chivalrous warrior. We have an explicit statement in the Bhavisayata-kahā that pride is the treasure of warriors.¹ It was out of this sentiment of honour~~†~~ that his notions of a fair play, generosity and such other took their birth. It was clearly realised that the ideals of chivalry are high ideals difficult to attain. In the Rukmīnī-haraṇā² it has been stated that the code of conduct for a hero is beyond the comprehension of low ksatriyas.

A chivalrous hero invited war. War was for him but a

1. p.93 (XIII.6.8).

2. Rupakasātkam, p.44.

sport which he never shunned. Literary works¹ and inscriptions² are replete with references to indicate that a hero treated a war like a game of sport.

A hero could not tolerate any opposition. The very sight of force swelled his desire for a show of prowess and there arose in his heart a feeling of anger.³ Chivalry was thus essentially arrogant in nature. Kalhana⁴ observes that in the Kali y age strength was burdened with arrogance. In conformity with the increasing prevalence of vane and arrogant chivalry the Darpa-dalana of Keemendra gives a full section to saurya-vicāra in which he speaks about the arrogance borne out of one's chivalric valour. It appears that there was a certain amount of recklessness associated with chivalry which often did not heed to the counsels of prudence. Bāṇa⁵ no doubt refers to the ideal of prowess being augmented by valour and sharp intellect. But it appears from his own works that valour

1. Kathāsaritsāgara, VIII.3.178; VIII.4.35; Rukminī-harana in Rūpakasātkam, pp. 50, 71, 105.

2. B.I., II p.194; XXIII.1; Bhārata-kaumudī, I p.437.

3. Rukminī-harana in Rūpakasātkam, p.48.

4. VIII.161.

5. (Kāvya-mālā) VI p.103.

6. Harasacarita (Kane) V p.31 - saurya-patu-prajñopavṛhita-parākramasya.

was often arrogant and reckless.¹ In literary works of the period we often read of cases of such arrogant chivalry. Thus, the Daśakumāra-carita² speaks of a certain Mattakala who through over-confidence in the prowess of his arms marches against a powerful enemy with only a few soldiers accompanying him. A warrior named Māṅgu died fighting all alone when the king of the Gurjar³ a country had retreated at the advance of Mleccha army.³

Recklessness was an attribute of the chivalric warrior. He fought without caring for his safety or life. Sarahapāda⁴ says that one cannot establish his valour without ~~samāg~~ courting death. The Tripuradhā⁵ also refers to chivalrous heroes fighting forgetful of the fear of death.

Death on the battle-field was regarded as the highest glory for a true warrior and there was no sin greater than fleeing from a battle. These ideas are no doubt very ancient. In the Rgveda⁶ we meet the belief that a soldier dying

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1. Kādambarī (Pūrvabhāga) (N.S.P., 1948), p.333.
 2. (Kale) p.32 - kupito'ni Lātapatir-dorvīrya-sarvenāpa-sainika-sameto yoddhumabhyagāt.
 3. Prabandhaśintāmani, p.72 ll.22-24.
 4. Dohakoṣa, p.321 (XIV.50).
 5. Rupaka-śaṭkam, p.106.
 6. X.154.2-5.

on the battle-field is transported to heaven. It was a great humiliation for a warrior to die in bed.¹ In our period we find Kṣemendra² glorifying the death on the battle-field. In the Rājatarāṅginī we have many references to the humiliation of a warrior dying on his couch³ and of the honour of one dying on the battle-field who absolved of the debt of his master goes to heaven.⁴ The belief that the warriors slain in the battle go straight to paradise seems to have been quite widespread.⁵ Sarahapāda⁶ says that a warrior retreating from the battle-field suffers in glory. It has been observed in the Rukmiṇī-haraṇa⁷ that he who flees from the battle-field transgresses the fair rules of chivalry. A verse quoted in Aucitya-vicāraśāstra⁸ may be said to contain the true utterances of a chivalrous hero who without claiming any certainty about the result of the battles which depends on fate claims that when in the battle-field he always makes a vow that the enemy shall not see the back of his horse. In the Rājadharmakāṇḍa

1. Viṣṇu, III.44; Mbh., XII.97.23-25.

2. Kalāvīlāsa, X.37.

3. VII.1364.

4. VII.147, 1484, 1501-2; VIII.197-8. See also VII.1402-4.

5. Cf. Kavindravāsanāśamuṇḍaya, v.174.

6. Dohakośa, p.309 (XIV.16).

7. Rūpaka-śaṭkam, p.67.

8. p.5.

of his Kṛtyakalpataṛu¹ Lakṣmīdhara devotes much space, quoting earlier texts to emphasize the duty of a soldier to die fighting in the battle and not to flee from it. It is thus said that a kṣatriya cannot show his back to the enemy; he has the brāhmaṇa on his back whom he must not expose to the enemy. The soldier who flees from the battle takes over all his ruler's sin and whatever merit he has accumulated goes to the king. Every step taken by one who deserts his king in battle is equal in sin to brāhmaṇa-slaughter. There is no other way in requiting the king's wages than dying for him in battle. He who dies in battle stands in no need of the usual funerals for his relations are not polluted by his death. Thousands of celestial damsels wait for him who dies in battle. K.V.R. Aiyangar² reads in all these details the need to face the Muslim invaders by staking the life. But we disagree with him. It would rather seem that the Indians did not realise the nature of the Muslim invasion and the menace it meant to Indian culture. They never tried to present a stiff opposition to the invaders and instead engaged their energies in petty

1. pp.130-6.

2. Ibid., introduction, p.75.

rivalries.

It was utter dishonour for a defeated warrior if his life was spared or if he returned alive from the battle-field. Such a man smarting under a feeling of shame felt shy to face others. Thus, we read that the general of king Kumārapāla after his defeat at the hands of Mallikārjuna returned with his face painted black, putting on a black dress, with a black umbrella, raised over his head and living in a black tent.¹ That such notions prevailed in the period would appear also from Muslim accounts. Thus, Firishta² speaks of a custom among the Hindus that when a rājā was overpowered twice by strangers, he became disqualified to reign. We read of some historical instances which would appear to be in line with these ideas and customs. Al-'Utbi³ for example informs us how king Jayapāla of Bhatinda, defeated twice once by Sabuktigīn and then by Sultān Mahmūd, caused a funeral pyre to be erected and perished in its flames. Likewise, we read of Kulphand⁴ who when defeated by Sultān Mahmūd thought life not worth living after the dishonour, slew his wife with a dagger and then drove it

1. Prabandhacintāmaṇi, p.81 ll.1-2.

2. (Briggs) I.38.

3. Elliot and Dowson, II.27.

into his own body.¹

A chivalric hero was expected to be fair in his fight. It was dishonour for him to resort to diplomacy and intrigue. Such low expedients were viewed as opposed to the canons of chivalry.² In the Tilakamañjarī ideal chivalry has been described as guileless (nirvyāja)³ and it is observed that it is the low kṣatriyas who for gaining easy victory resort to a sudden attack.⁴ On the other hand, the ideal for a chivalric fighter was to give his opponent full time to prepare. In the Prabandhacintāmaṇī⁵ we read that when Śaṅkha came to fight against Vastupāla and on behalf of the Arab merchant Saīda a messenger was sent to fix a day for battle.

A hero was always true to his word. That is why we often read of warriors making promises and sticking to them even if it meant loss or suffering to them. The Prabandhacintāmaṇī speaks of a chivalrous warrior (subhata) named Bhūṇapāla who in the fight between the forces of Vastupāla and Śaṅkha, had

1. Ibid. 43.

2. Samudramāthana in Rūpaka-śaṭkam, p.185; Tripuraśāha, in Rūpaka-śaṭkam, pp.113, 98.

3. p.75.

4. Tilakamañjarī, p.76.

5. p. 102.

6. p.114 ll.24-5.

taken a vow that if he struck anyone other than Śaṅkha he would incur the sin of striking a kapilā cow. Here we may note a few very interesting references to oath-taking in the Rājataranginī. Dāmara Saṅgrāma in accepting to help king Cakravarman regain his throne requires him to promise kind treatment to the dāmaras after recovering the throne. Both Saṅgrāmasimha and Cakravarman place a foot on a sheepskin sprinkled with blood, and mutually take an oath by sacred libation sword in hand.¹ Likewise, we find the Khasas resorting to this device in order to dispel the fears and distrust of Bhoja.² As in these two cases the parties are in one case a dāmara and in another the Khasas it is likely that the device was in vogue among the tribal people. It is to be noted that in other references to oath by sacred libation, the ceremony is said to be performed in the presence of a deity and in a shrine.³

It is quite ~~likely~~ natural that in feudal wars with emphasis on a show of personal valour the notion of honour led warriors to indulge in accusing their rivals and praising

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1. V.326.
 2. VIII.3006.
 3. VIII.2222.

their own might¹. Thus, we find in the Tilakamañjarī that at the time of the siege of Kāñcī there was a boastful exchange of hot words between the two parties². No doubt Sarahapada observes that a real warrior does not brag while fighting³ but there was in the period a definite tendency like that. The Aucityavivācaracārā refers to the bragging of a warrior, which, though in the manner of true kṣatriya and possessing the propriety of meaning, is bereft of poetic vigour⁴. It is not clear how far it was a poetic convention and how far it actually took place. Even if it is treated as a poetic convention its prevalence in the period can be inferred from the references in the literary works of the period.

These chivalric hero would not like to fight with a man below his standard⁵. We have already referred to hero Bhūṇapāla

1. This feature is very common in the epics, too.

2. p.83 - Avikrātopa-dubhprasahaiśca taih saba-prākāra-sikhara-vartinah kusuma-sekhara-rāiṇya-lokasvānyonyā-kṛta-nirbhartsa-nāni.

3. Dohakośa, p.341 (XIV.121).

4. p.5.

5. Lakṣmīdhara in his Kṛtyakalpataru (Dānakāṇḍa, Introduction, p.48) describes the Hammira adversary of the Gāhaḍavāla king Govindacandra as eager for the fortune of an unequal combat (asama-samara-sampal-lampatah). It would, therefore, appear that he realised that the Muslim invaders were not following the chivalrous ideals of warfare. But we would maintain that this difference was not generally and deeply realised. The history of the success of the Muslim armies would indicate that one of the main reasons for the defeat
(continued)

who had taken the vow of not fighting with anybody other than Śaṅkha.¹ A hero could display his valour only on proper occasions.² Obviously a warrior could not expect to reap any glory by fighting with an unequal foe.³ From the account of the war between Chach and Maharat of Jaipur, as preserved in the Chach-nāma, it would appear that warriors, who followed the ideal even though ^{they} suffered a loss, were not wanting in those times. Thus, when Maharat offered to decide the dispute by single combat, Chach submitted that being a brāhmaṇa he was unaccustomed to fight on horse-back. It is recorded that in order to meet Chach on equal terms Maharat alighted but was treacherously slain by his cunning and unchivalrous adversary.⁴

Here we may refer to certain interesting customs indicating submission which we find in the records of the period.

continued)

of the Hindu kings was the fact that they adhered to their chivalric concepts which obviously were obsolete in the sense that their Muslim adversaries did not subscribe to them.

1. Prabandhaśintāmaṇi, p.114 ll.24-25.
2. Tripuradāna in Rūpaka-ṣaṭkam, p.77.
3. Ibid., p.114.
4. Elliot and Dowson I.411f.

Laying down of arms¹ is no doubt a very ancient and universal method for a warrior to indicate his submission to the superior fighter. From the Rājatarāṅginī it appears that cutting off one's fingers was regarded as an indication of submission.² Thus, the rebel Mallārjuna when proceeding towards the capital to offer his submission is said to have carried his amputated finger in an earthen vessel.³ Binding of the head-dress round the neck and carrying of a shoe on the head were some other marks of submission.⁴

Connected with the above were some other conventions which required a humane attitude towards the opponent, especially one who is not a match to the hero.⁵ The Aucoitya-vicāracarā observes that by showing might against the prostrated one suffers mockery.⁶ In the Dvyāśraya-kāvya we read of the dictates of the chivalric code of conduct to be merciful to a foe who has swooned.⁷ We find cases when warriors, even if placed in a miserable condition, followed this ideal with

1. Rāj., VIII.605, 640.

2. V.150; VIII.1594, 1738, 2272, 2308, 3300. Cf. Samayamātrkā, II.106.

3. Rāj., VIII.598-601.

4. Ibid., 2273.

5. Cf. Prabandhaśintāmaṇi, p.37 ll.19-20.

6. pp. 1f.

7. II p.492.

severe consequences to them. Thus, Harṣa when fleeing to save his life was found out in a mendicants hut and when attacked by the pursuers is said to have pulled down one of the soldiers but did not kill the fallen foe. This act of unintelligent chivalry has meritedly received censure at the hands of Kalhaṇa.¹ The Naiṣadhiya-carita brands the murder of a foe who has reposed confidence in the man as a mean act.² We learn from bardic ballads found in the Prthivīrāja Rāso, Paramāla Rāso and Alha Rāso that when after the first clash between the Cāhamāna soldiers and the Candellas in the royal garden of the Candellas, Paramāla (Paramarddideva) summoned Ūdala, one of his generals and a leader of the Banāphara clan, and asked him to attack the Cāhamāna soldiers already wounded, Ūdala was not willing and tried in vain to impress upon the Candella king among other things that to attack the wounded soldiers will be unchivalrous.³

Romantic love of women is often found accompanying the growth of chivalric tradition. In India this feature had not developed to the extent we find in mediaeval Europe. Even then the presence of the tendency in our period of Indian history

1. Rāj., VII.1705.

2. I.131.

3. See Mitra, Early Rulers of Khajuraho, p.121.

cannot be ignored. Thus, in a couplet in the Prabandhasintā-
mañi¹ which seems to represent the aspirations of a chivalrous
 hero we find three yearnings - for the embrace of a fair lady,
 breaking the sword on the head of a warrior and riding a swift
 horse. It would appear that many a war was fought for the
 hands of a fair maiden. In the Śisūpālavadha Balarāma has
 rightly observed that of the mighty tree of enmity women are
 the principal roots.² The epigraphic records of the period are
 replete with references to the wives of vanquished foes
 lingering in the prisons of their patrons or serving them in
 the durbār.³ In the Kathākoṣa we have stories in which a
 chivalrous warrior finding a lady in distress or hearing her
 cry for help plunges forward to her rescue without caring
 to weigh the odds he is going to face.⁴

A chivalrous hero is always prepared to help the cause
 of a distressed or to fight for his religion or culture. The
 need for this aspect of chivalry is all the more important in

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1. p.32 - Ehu jammu naggaham giyañ bhaḍasiri khaggu na bhaggu.
Tikkha turiya na vahiya gori gali na laggu.
 2. II.38 - Baddhamūlasya mūlam hi mahādvairataroḥ strivah.
 3. E.I., II.265 v.25; III.91; I.138. Cf. Gaudavaho, p.199
 vv. 695-97.
 4. pp. 34, 37.

a society passing through a phase of insecurity, disturbance or anarchy. We find Lakṣmīdhara emphasizing it in his works. Thus, he says that a kṣatriya who dies in defence of his people wins the same fruit as he who does a horse sacrifice.¹ The king killed in defence of the property of brāhmanas is the spirit of sacrifice incarnate.² The hero who listens unmoved to the tale of woe of a brāhmana, without going to his rescue, goes to hell.³ Likewise, in the Dānakāṇḍa of his Kṛtyakalpataṛu Lakṣmīdhara devotes a special section to abhaya-dāna which has been included among major gifts greater than the formal ones and is without any restrictions as regards the recipients.⁴

The chivalrous warriors occupied an honoured place in the estimation of the king and the people. Thus, we hear of a warrior named Māṅgū of incredible power serving king Siddharāja of Gujarat.⁵ In the Bṛhatkathakośa of Hariṣeṇa⁶ we read of a sahasrabhata (a warrior who could fight single-handed

1. Kṛtyakalpataṛu, Rājadharmakāṇḍa, p.133.

2. Ibid., p.134.

3. Ibid., p.135.

4. Introduction, p.97.

5. Prabandhaśintāmaṇi, p.72 ll.9-10.

6. p.59.

with a thousand warriors^f who was honoured by a king by the lord^ship of many villages. The Purātana-prabandha-saṅgraha also mentions a sahasrayodhī as adorning the court of a certain king.² Such warriors were everywhere in demand and even distant kingdoms were eager to have them at their courts. Thus, we hear of a chivalrous hero named Jagaddeva who was serving under Siddharāja being invited by king Paramarddin to his own court.³

Society often loved to preserve the memory of such valorous fighters. The Kādambarī contains an interesting reference to people indicating the place of the death of a hero by raising heaps in the form of platforms of grass, leaves and wood.⁴ In the Prabandhacintāmaṇi we read that the place where Māṅgū had fallen fighting against the Mleccha army was famous even in its time.⁵ We have a remarkable corroboration of the practice by inscriptions on hero-stones which record the death of persons in important battles.⁶ In Bangla, a small

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1. Hemacandra, Abhidhānacintāmaṇi, III.428.
 2. p.114.
 3. Prabandhacintāmaṇi, p.114 ll.24-25.
 4. V.S.Agrawala, Kādambarī, no.215.
 5. p.72 ll.22-24.
 6. Cf. Indian Archaeology, 1955-56, p .30.

village near Narwar fort, we find stone pillars commemorating warriors who lost their lives fighting on behalf of Gopāla, most likely of the Yajvapāla family, against the Candella king Vīravarman.¹

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Feudalism, especially in its chivalric aspect, is sometimes found to have a high sense of honour. It is, therefore, not strange that in a feudalised society which gives premium of values to dignity there should develop such standards of honour. In India, in the period under study, we find indications to suggest that a number of practices to mark respect and dishonour had developed. We intend to take a note of some of these practices here.

One form of honouring a man was to permit him to accept a betel leaf from the hands of a king. Thus, whenever anybody accomplished anything significant or undertook to perform something difficult the king used to offer him betel leaves to show his appreciation of him. We read in the Bṛhatkathā-kosa² that when the doctors who remove the effect of poison

1. I.H.Q., XXXII.403.

2. X.86.

came to cure the daughter of king Vastupāla of Ujjainī, they were honoured with betel leaves and other things. In another story in the same text we find a king¹ honouring a lepakara by giving him betel leaves with his own hands when the latter offered that he would construct the image as required by the king.¹ In the Prabandhacintāmaṇī² also king Mūlarāja is said to have given betel leaves to a slave with his own hands as a mark of honour.

The practice of a king being pleased bestowing his ornaments is a common one found alike in different countries and different periods. It would however appear that in the period under study if the king gave his bracelets engraved with his name it was considered as one of the highest honours. The recipient thus came to occupy a prominent place in the esteem and confidence of the king. Hariṣena in one story refers to a king Viśākhadatta of Vārāṇasī who honoured his queen Buddhimatī, bathed her with pitchers of gold and presented her with his bracelet (kaṅkaṇa) with his name engraved upon it.³

1. XX.13.

2. p.19 l.19.

3. Bṛhatkathākośa, XIV.34.

Likewise, king Brahmadatta pleased with Vasudeva is said to have given him his kaṅkaṇa having his own name¹ on it.

Sometimes a king gave to someone one of his feudatories a special mark to be used by him as his distinctive privilege for some meritorious services performed by him. Thus, we learn that Āsarāja Cāhamāna when ousted from his kingdom of Nadol took service under the Caulukya king Jayasiṃha Siddharāja. Once obeying Jayasiṃha's order he went to Dhārā, forced its master Naravarman to shut himself in the fort, and so distinguished himself during the siege there that Jayasiṃha granted him the honour of using a golden kalāśa on his tent.²

The Brhatkathākośa has a story about a strange form of honour. It was a way of honouring a man who had performed some remarkable service to the king. The honour called the feast of collaka included first a feast ~~x~~ in the palace and then in the house of the public throughout the kingdom of the ruler concerned and then he completed the round of the dinners by taking a final one at the palace. Thus, the honour amounts to the man being recognised as the most honourable guest to

1. Ibid., XXXV.18.

2. E.I., IX p.76 v.26.

be invited in turn not only by the king but all the householders in his kingdom. In this story we find the mother of Vasudeva requesting the king to grant her and her son this honour.¹

There was another strange custom by which a man communicated his desire to undertake to perform a difficult work for the king. It was the practice that when the king was faced with some difficult work or problem which could not be solved in the ordinary course with the men and resources at his disposal a state servant used to parade the important streets and proclaim by the beat of drums the work which the king wanted to be done. The man who wanted to do the work would touch the drum to express his willingness to do the work. Then the man was taken to the king with due honour. Once when king Bhīma could not see his way to fulfilling the demand of king Bhoja he got the drums beaten. A courtesan touched the drum² and then offered the solution to the king. In a story in the Kathākoṣa³ not able to find a way to help a ship come out of the hollow of the snake-encircled mountain,

1. XXXV.33-35.

2. Prabandhascintāmaṇi, p.47 ll.1-2. See also *ibid.*, p.2 l.11.

3. pp.28f.

a king sent a crier with a drum round the city. A certain pilot who lived there touched the drum and offered to find out a way to help the ship.

The practice of resorting to duel fights to vindicate one's honour or to redress the alleged wrong done to him, well known in different countries, appears to have been prevalent in this period. Marco Polo speaking about the people of Cail or Kayal in the kingdom of the Pāṇḍyas says that¹ when a man wishing~~g~~ to offer gross insult to another spits out a mouthful of betel leaves upon his face, the latter seeks and obtains the king's permission to fight the offender. They fight in public with sword and target until one of them is killed. It would appear that the custom was more popular in the South. A story in the Kathāsaritsāgara refers to it in connection with Kāñcī. We read that² when a door-keeper of a king of Kāñcī falsely charged a foreign merchant before the king with the abduction of his wife, the merchant proposed a duel to decide the issue. After obtaining the king's approval they both entered the list on horseback and fought in the king's presence, and when the door-keeper was felled down from

1. II.371.

2. XLIII.160-61.

his horse five times in succession, the king honoured the victor as he deserved, and deprived the door-keeper of his office and his wealth. Duels appear to have been popular in the period. The Mānasollāsa has a detailed section on the duels between combatants called aṅkas. Those fighting duels have been grouped under eight heads according to the reasons for their fighting. It is significant that according to the text the king allowed the duel only in case he failed to dissuade them from the duel. The duel used to start at a signal given by the king and it was stopped by the king with a signal when he found the limbs of the combatants covered with blood and their hands and feet severed.¹

Abū Zaid refers to a strange custom of certain ^elected nobles self-immolatingg themselves on the funeral pyres of their kings : "Some of the kings of India, when they ascend the throne, have a quantity of rice cooked and served on banana leaves. Attached to the king's person are three or four hundred companions, who have joined him of their ownx free will without compulsion. When the kingx has eaten some of the rice, he gives it to his companions. Each in his turn approaches, takes a small quantity and eats it. All

1. IV.829-78.

those who so eat the rice are obliged, when the king dies, or is slain, to burn themselves to the very last man on the very day of the king's decease. This is a duty which admits of no delay and not a vestige of these men ought to be left".¹ It however appears that the custom was popular mostly in southern India. Nainār has suggested that the rite of the king's companion partaking of the cooked rice eaten by the king himself may refer to a festival which used to be held every twelfth year at the Tirunāvāyi temple in the Ponnai taluk (Malabar). This festival called the Māmakham or Mahāmakham (literally meaning big sacrifice) is said to have been instituted by one of the Perumal emperors prior to the Kollam era and was continued by their successors including the Zamorins.² Marco Polo associates this custom with the Pāṇḍya kingdom. He observes that the Pāṇḍya king has a number of barons called the king's Trusty Lieges who are in constant attendance upon him and after his death burn themselves with their master's body.³ Inscriptional evidence also appears to associate the practice with Tamil and Kannada areas. Cola

1. Elliot and Dowson I p.9.

2. Arab Geographers' knowledge of southern India, p.107 f.n.

3. II.339.

inscriptions of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries refer to the Velaikkāras or personal body-guards of a ruler taking the vow to die with their masters.¹ We have no specific evidence to indicate the prevalence of the custom in northern India. It is however to be noted that Merutuṅga at one place does refer to one hundred and twenty followers of Vīradhavaḷa burning themselves with the king after his death.² It must however be kept in mind that here there is no reference to the followers having undergone a śrīṭṭi or taken a vow similar to the one referred to in other sources.

From the Prabandhaśintāmaṇi we learn of a custom to indicate the position of a man on the basis of his possessions. It would appear that a man had the right to burn one lamp for each one laṣ which ^{he possessed. The man having a crore would} hoist a flag to indicate it. In the story we read that once a king saw many lamps (pradīpa) burning at the house of a merchant. He was informed that these are the lamps to indicate the laṣ of his property (lakṣa-pradīpas). The next day he summoned the merchant to the court. On learning that the merchant had ₹ 84 laṣ with him he gave him 16 laṣ from his treasury. He thought that with so many

1. A.R.S.I.E., 267-69 of 1929-30; *ibid.*, 122-25 and 202-3 of 1934-35.

2. Prabandhaśintāmaṇi, p.104 ll.23-24.

lamps burning the merchant was always under the fear of fire and that now he could hoist the flag for possessing a crore.¹ Elsewhere we read of a city as full of koṭidhvajas.²

It appears from the Prabandhacintāmaṇi that noblemen occupying a high place in the estimation of the people would often select certain ideas as the guiding mottoes of their lives. In order to be constantly reminded of those dignified ideas they would get them engraved on the bracelets. We read that king Bhoja had got four verses in the āryā metre engraved on his bracelet.³

In the literary works of the period we find a strange practice resorted to select a successor for the throne in case the king died without leaving any claimant to the throne. The barons and the ministers in such a situation took recourse to the five ordeals of the elephant, the horse, the chowries, the umbrellas and divine voice. An elephant used to be let out with a pitcher full of water kept on its temples. The elephant indicated its choice by sprinkling water on a man and putting him on its back. The horse used to neigh its

1. p.71 ll.6-11.

2. Ibid., p.109 l.22.

3. Ibid., p.25 l.22.

approval. The chowries fanned the man, the umbrella was held over his head and a divine voice shouted victory to him. He who was suggested by these ordeals was selected as the king. In the Kathākoṣa we have many references to the use of this device.¹

As against these customs indicating honour and respect bestowed upon a man or suiting the life of a dignified man, we have others which were meant to show disrespect to a man and to imply a contemptuous attitude towards him. In the Bṛhatkathākoṣa we read that to humiliate a man and to show utter contempt for him he was made to sit on an ass with his head shaved completely or with five tufts of hair remaining and with five bilva (leaves) tied to them he was made to roam through the streets with drums beating ahead of him.² The man punished to death had often to bear such humiliations. The Kathākoṣa³ informs us that the executioners took Ṛṣidattā, and entwined indigo with the seven locks of her hair. They encircled her neck with a garland of nimba leaves; they held

1. pp.4, 128, 155.

2. XI.139; XXIII.34f; XXIV.38f; LVII.209f; LXXVIII.87; LXXXII.39f.

3. p.108.

over her a shoe, by way of umbrella, on a lofty pole, they placed a piece of an old broom, by way of tuft, on her head; the whole of her body was stained with powder; she was hooted by the low people who had assembled, and so they ~~xx~~ led her, with dissonant cymbals, horns, and drums preceding her, in this condition through the city.

Merutuṅga in his Prabandhacintāmaṇi refers to the custom of holding grass in the mouth as a token of surrender. It is stated that as Paramardīn ^{saved himself} ~~was preserved~~ from Prthvīrāja by taking grass in his mouth, grass is now worshipped in Paramardīn's city.¹ It is not clear how the custom was formed. It may however be suggested that by taking grass in one's mouth, one equated himself with harmless cattle who are not to be killed. This idea occurs elsewhere in the Prabandhacintāmaṇi itself where it is said that since even enemies are let off when near death, if they take grass in their mouths, how can you slay these harmless beasts who always feed on grass.² Historically speaking however the practice can be

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1. p.300. This fact is referred to in the Sārṅgadhara-paddhati, v.1254. Cf. Marsacarita (ed. A.A.Führer), pp.174f - Yah parakiyenāpi kataravallabhena rana-mukhena tṛpeneva dhṛtendrajata jivitena.
 2. p.55. Cf. Subhāṣitaratnabhāṇḍāgāra, p.244 - Tṛṇamukhamapi na khalu tvam tyajanti he harina vairipah sabarah yasasaiva jivitamidam tyaja yojitasṛṅgasangramah. Also tṛṇabhakṣaṇa-nyaya in the Laukikanyayanjali by G.A.Jacob, III pp.58f.

traced back to the Mahābhārata which says that one should not kill an aged man, a child, a woman, or ^{one} him who holds grass in his mouth or he who says 'I am yours'.¹

Grass was used in another manner also to signify extreme humiliation. We find in the Caṇḍa-kaśīka that when Haris-candra wishes to sell himself as a slave the stage direction is that he does so by placing grass on his head.² Likewise in the Lekhapaddhati we find that a girl when about to sell herself off as a slave addresses the people by placing grass on her head. Probably this idea was to suggest extreme worthlessness or insignificance of the person doing it.

In the Prabandhacintāmaṇi we have an interesting reference to the way in which a successful invader used to humiliate his enemy. We read that Kulacandra, the general of Bhoja's army invaded and captured Apahillapura and after sowing cowries at the door of the tower of the palace (dhavalagrhaḥaṭikā) and obtained the charter of victory (jayapatra).³

Another similar practice is referred to in the Kumārapāla-⁴

1. XII.98 - Vṛddhabālau na hantavyau na ca strī naiva prasthatah.
Trṇapurṇamukhasāśva tavasmiti ca yo vadet.

Cf. Baudhāyana, I.10.18.

2. p.69.

3. p.44.

4. p.32 11.17-18.

carita of Jinamaṇḍana.¹ On one occasion in A.D. 1149 the Caulukya king Kumārapāla advanced into the territory of the Cāhamānas of Nadol and capturing Pālī out of anger had ginger sown there. It has been suggested that this operation involved the sack of the town and the destruction of some of its chief buildings.²

1. p.42b.

2. D.Sharma, Early Chauhān Dynasties, p.53. It is interesting to note that King Kharavela had a city ploughed with donkeys yoked to plough.

CHAPTERXIII - CONCLUSION

The question which often agitates the mind of a student of Indian history is whether the term feudalism may be used to describe the political institutions existing in northern India in the early mediaeval period. Though no full-length study of the conditions existing in India has so far been offered, this has not prevented scholars from passing their judgements on the question. The opinions of scholars vary widely. On the one hand we have the view of P.Nath¹ that even in ancient times covered by the epics, the Arthasāstra and the Greek accounts India was divided into feudal estates. On the other extreme we have the view advocated by P.Saran² who holds that the feudal features arose in the political organisation of the Rajputs only in the Muslim period in obscure circumstances and that before that period there were no traces of any feudalistic institution. Even in some of the standard text-books on this period the term feudalism is used to describe conditions without taking into consideration the full implications³ of the term. But significantly enough in

1. Economic Conditions of Ancient India, pp. 2, 6, 120.

2. I.C., XIII.73-78.

3. Ishwari Prasad, History of Mediaeval India, pp.35-36.

the two volumes of the History and Culture of the Indian People which cover the early mediaeval period the term feudalism is not used in the relevant chapters.

Our survey has indicated that there are certain close resemblances between the institutions of India in the early mediaeval period and those of Europe in the later part of the middle ages. But at the same time it has to be recognised that the resemblances do not cover all the aspects of the feudal institutions and there are significant differences not only in details but also in some of the essentials.

■ On the side of similarity we can point out that in early mediaeval India the ideal of empire based on the acceptance of the overlordship of the emperor by the subordinate rulers had led to the fragmentation of political power. The references to petty chiefs such as bhogikas and rāutas would indicate that the real political power in this period was enjoyed by a landed aristocracy. Thus, we see that the actual, if not the legal basis of political power was to a considerable extent based upon land. Coulborn writes¹: "Since personal contacts are important in feudal government, it tends

1. Feudalism in History, pp.4f.

to be more effective at the local level where such contacts are easy and frequent. Since political power is personal rather than institutional, there is relatively little separation of functions; the military leader is usually an administrator and the administrator is usually a judge". In India we find that the land granted as religious endowments, subject to certain condition was not to be interfered with by the state servants. The secular grants followed the privileges of religious grants. The list of privileges and rights enjoyed by these grantees indicate that they not only realised the different state dues but also had a right to the proceeds of judicial cases and also claimed some dues for administration. They are specifically described as free from the administrative control of the officers of the central government. Thus, it is clear that these grantee combined in themselves a number of functions.

In the second place, we notice that the feudal polity in mediaeval Europe is characterised by the system of assigning fiefs for military service. As has been rightly observed,¹

1. Sprott, Sociology, p.64.

"the more the monarch can administer by means of a bureaucracy, and a paid army the more 'absolute' his power is; the more he has to decentralise administration, grant fiefs and benefices in return for services and confirm land ownership on the same terms, the more he approximates to 'feudalism' in the political sense, and beyond feudalism if the power of the monarch is weak, and his administrative organisation immature, lies that threat of anarchy which besets the ~~fundamental~~ policy of the feudal king". In India we find that land was granted to feudatories, kinsmen and officers with obligations to render military service.

In the third place, we know that "there are usually marked distinctions within the aristocracy; even in the simplest feudal society there are leaders and followers and in a highly developed society, such as that of ~~the~~ Western Europe, many more gradations may be found"¹. We notice that in India also there was a complicated series of feudatory and overlord relationships. We have references showing that feudatories of a sovereign king had their own feudatories

1. R.Coulborn, Feudalism in History, p.5.

and that there were several grades of them.

R. Coulborn¹ observes that in theory and occasionally in practice, the feudal aristocracy can be an aristocracy of ability; actually, in all feudal societies there has been a strong, almost irresistible tendency towards heredity of function. The existing land-grants indicate that in India village assignments were made on religious occasions often to learned and pious brāhmapas. In the case of officers and feudatories we have cases where such grants were made for meritorious service. As regards appointment of officers we do find that though there was no legal principle of hereditary appointment, the posts being said to have been conferred on a person deserving ~~it~~ them, we do see a tendency that the higher posts often tended to be monopolised by some families. The legal works, in emphasising that hereditary principle should not be respected in making appointments, in a way recognise that in practice heredity did matter much.

Further, we do find resemblances in the matter of some of ~~the~~ obligations which a feudatory owed to his overlord

1. Feudalism in History, p.5.

and also in the rights which the overlord claimed and exercised over his feudatory and the territory enjoyed by the latter.

The ideal of chivalry which is known to have been associated with European knights during the feudal period is found to have been current in India also.

As pointed out by W.J.H. Sprott¹ "common to all uses of the word (feudalism) is the implication of an agricultural society in which there are large estates, cultivated by persons in varying degrees of servitude and with varying obligations". In some of the inscriptions from Orissa and Rajputana we find that the peasants and other villagers were occupying a status similar to that of villeins under European feudal order.

Feudalism in its wider sense is sometimes taken to stand for a self-sufficient natural economy by contrast to money economy. We find that even in this sense the term may be used to describe the conditions of the early mediaeval period in the history of India. It is well known that the coins of this period are not found in abundance, are generally debased in metal and reveal considerable decrease in weight when

1. Sociology, p.63.

compared to the standard weight. We find that even some of the important dynasties of the period did not issue a regular coinage. It seems that not all the members of a dynasty but only a few of them, sometimes only one, issued the coins. Moreover, these coins were mostly in one or two metals and only rarely in all the three metals. Again, we do not find the different denominations of a coin which form a regular series. The testimony of foreign writers and indigenous literature alike shows that in place of coined money cowries were generally used for exchange in small transactions. All this may indicate that the economy of the country was tending towards a natural one. The amount of foreign trade and also trade between the different parts of the country had decreased and as barter and cowries sufficed for much of the local demands the use of coins in the period appears to have been less than what we know of the Kuṣāṇa and Gupta periods.

But these resemblances do not mean that the institutions in India agreed totally with the feudal institutions of Europe. The resemblances do not go very far and we can notice differences in the details even in respect of features that appear to be similar in the two regions.

The basic difference between the institutions of India and Europe is the fact that unlike mediaeval Europe in India land-tenure did not determine all social and political relations and status.

The land-grants in India which have been recovered cannot be strictly speaking described as fiefs. Under the Cāhamānas and some other dynasties we find references to members of the royal family and tribe enjoying assignments resembling fiefs but the term fief can be applied to them only in a ~~xx~~ loose sense.

Even in the matter of the obligations of a feudatory and the rights of his overlord over him we find that the detailed rules which developed under European feudalism do not appear in India. There does not appear to have been much fixed law on the point and their relations depended on their mutual power.

Further, the economic life of the period in northern India does not appear to have been affected as much as we find under European feudalism. There was still considerable use of coins, and the inland trade between different regions

was by no means insignificant.

Though we have some evidence to indicate that some cultivators and village craftsmen in certain back-water areas were reduced to the status of villeins, we do not find that this practice prevailed in all the areas. Moreover, the evidence does not always imply that even in the recorded cases all the peasants in a village were reduced to this status.

Even in England the public law is found working against localism which often grows as a characteristic symptom of feudalism. But in India in the early mediaeval^{period} like other periods the hold of the dharmaśāstra works and the legal and social ideals advocated in them exercised a profound check over justice, social usage and property law and prevented them from getting completely feudalised.

R.Coulborn¹ points out that feudalism can be described as a series of responses to certain kinds of challenge. A challenge which affected a good many societies was that of the decay or weakening of a highly organised political system - an empire or a relatively large kingdom. The spasms of disintegration of such a system can sometimes produce by way of

1. Feudalism in History, p.7.

response a series of moves towards reconstruction which lead in a feudal direction. The institutions in India differ from European feudalism in the sense that ~~they~~ here the imperial administrative machinery did not collapse to the extent one finds in Europe. No doubt there were many small principalities in northern India and there was no paramount power in all the centuries forming the early mediaeval period. But these principalities maintained their administrative set up intact to a considerable extent. In the land-grants of these dynasties we find lists of officers which testifies to the presence of a bureaucracy under them. Sometimes we find specific references to officers being appointed to posts. Thus, the bureaucracy in India does not appear to have been completely feudalised.

It would therefore appear that the institutions in early mediaeval India are not identical with feudalism in mediaeval Europe. It cannot be denied, however, that there were certain feudal features in Indian institutions. If the term feudalism is used not very strictly to cover all the details which are commonly associated with European feudalism we may apply the

the term feudalism to describe conditions in India as well. It is to be noted that the feudal institutions in Europe also do not reveal a uniform system but embrace wide differences. The feudal practices vary so much according to time and place that it has been difficult for historians to bring them under a uniform description. It is well known¹ that in view of these variations F.W.Maitland suggested² that the feudal institutions³ could be called only a complex and not a system. If a concession is made to these variations the term feudalism may be used to signify the institutions of early mediaeval India. But in view of the differences, which at times appear to have been of a basic character we may, to be on the safer side, use the expression quasi-feudalism, as is suggested by Professor A.L. Basham.²

³ D.D.Kosambi divides the history of feudalism in India into two phases - feudalism from above and feudalism from below. The first is the earlier phase covering the period from the early fourth to the middle of the eighth centuries

1. The Constitutional History of England, p. 143.

2. The Wonder that was India, p. 93.

3. An introduction to the study of Indian history, Chs. IX and X. See p. 275.

whereas the second phase covers the subsequent period merging into the present age. "Feudalism from above means a state wherein an emperor or powerful king levied tribute from subordinates who still ruled in their own territories as long as they paid the paramount ruler. These subordinate rulers might even be tribal chiefs, and seem in general to have ruled the land by direct administration, without the intermediacy of a class which was in effect a landowning stratum. By feudalism from below is meant the next stage where a class of land-owners developed within the village, between the state and the peasantry, gradually to wield armed power over the local population. This class was subject to military service, hence claimed a direct relationship with the state power, without the intervention of any other stratum. Taxes were collected by small intermediaries who passed on a fraction to the feudal hierarchy, in contrast to direct collection by royal officials in feudalism from above". Thus, we can say that feudalism from above stands for the tributary system and feudalism from below reflects the emergence of a landed aristocracy. The distinction drawn here is no doubt a fine

one and makes clear the characteristic features. But it is to be remembered that even in the second phase we do not find that there was any considerable amount of commendation going on in India. There obviously must have been cases of village headman becoming the village lord or of a tribal chief taking advantage of the loose control of the central authority establishing himself as the local ruler. But the evidence at our disposal does not indicate that in different parts of northern India there was such a breakdown of central administration as to favour the emergence of petty chiefs holding sway over one or two villages. Thus, the emergence of feudal chiefs even in this period was mostly not from below but from above in the sense that the rise of this landed aristocracy was mostly the result of land-grants to brāhmanas, officers or even feudatories for meritorious service. The landed aristocracy owed its existence to the policy of the central authority, which, for some reasons, distributed these villages among different officers, feudatories etc. It was not usually a case of the king recognising the system which emerged independent of his power. The ini-

tiative lay with the king who finding the bureaucracy and the paid army not sufficient to cope with the altered conditions decentralised administration, and granted estates in return for services with a view to maintain the show of empire and the relics of or tendencies towards centralisation. The situation can be compared with¹ the conditions under the Norman kingdom of Sicily where the feudal institutions imported from France had to be imposed on a social and political system of extreme complexity. A central government of unusual strength succeeded in formulating a remarkably coherent system of feudal relationships, in which the rights and prerogatives of the lord and in particular those of the head of the state, were strongly emphasised.

Secondly, the tributary aspect of feudalism was not confined to the earlier phase, but continued in the second phase as well. Actually speaking we find that even in the second period there was a close mixture of the two phenomena. Thus, we can apply the expression 'feudalism' from below¹ to the institutions of the early mediaeval period only in a loose sense, to distinguish it from the earlier phase

1. Ganshoff, Feudalism, pp. 59f. q. by K. Mohan, Kashmir under the Locharas, p. 302

when the landed aristocracy had not evolved into a power to be reckoned with.

We would prefer to use the expression 'sāmanta-system' for the institutions of the early mediaeval India. It serves to emphasise the distinction between Indian feudalism and that in Europe. The history of the changes in the meaning of the term reflects the two phases of feudalism spoken of by D.D.Kosambi. We find that before the seventh century the term was used for a feudatory or a subordinate ruler. After the seventh century we see that it came to stand more and more for the petty feudal chiefs. But even then the earlier association with a tributary was retained. Thus, 'sāmanta-system' would be a happier expression than feudalism from below, because it covers both the features of the second phase of feudalism namely, the tributary system and the landed aristocracy.

APPENDIX

THE DATE OF THE LEKHAPADDHATI

The Lekhapaddhati is a collection of documents intended to provide specimens of different types of letters, official and private, which were in common use in mediaeval times. There are widely different views on the value of the text as a source for the social and political institutions of the early mediaeval period. Scholars generally dismiss it as of doubtful merit as it is a late text, and therefore do not utilise its testimony for reconstructing a picture of the institutions in this period. The text has recently been drawn upon in connection with institutions under the Cāhamānas and the Caulukyas. But so far there has been no attempt to analyse the question of its authenticity and date in detail.

Several manuscripts of this text are extant the oldest of which are dated V.S. 11533 and 1580. This excludes the possibility of the text being a modern forgery. The text would appear to have been based on authentic political details. By way of illustrating a treaty of alliance between two rulers the Lekhapaddhati contains the text of a treaty between

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1. D.Sharma, Early Chauhān Dynasties.
 2. A.K.Majumdar, Chaulukyas of Gujarat.
 3. Preface, pp. viii-xi.
 4. p. 52.

Lavanaprasāda and the Yādava king Siṃhana, the historicity of which is generally accepted.¹

We find that the dates of the documents in the Lekhapaddhati range between V.S. 802 and V.S. 1533 but most of them are dated in V.S. 1288. The basic question is whether the documents included in the text are actual copies of letters written in the year in which they are dated or all of these were drafted by a man in the fifteenth century and with arbitrary dates. There are certain indications which suggest that in some cases at least the given date conflicts with the details found in the documents. Thus a document dated V.S. 802 refers to a king as having conquered Garjanikādhirāja.² We find this very title applied to Mūlarāja II (A.D. 1175-1178) in two inscriptions dated 1206 and 1223 A.D.³ This king of Garjanika is to be identified with Mahmud of Ghazni. It follows that the date V.S. 802 does not suit the document in question in the Lekhapaddhati.

D.Sharma⁴ expresses doubt about the historical value of

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1. A.S.Altekar in the Early History of the Deccan (ed. by G. Yazdani), p.537, who, however, does not regard it as a true copy of the treaty.
 2. Lekhapaddhati, p.2 - Rapāṅgana-vinirjita-garjanikādhirāja.
 3. I.A., VI p. 194 ll.10f, p. 197 ll.14f.
 4. J.N.S.I., XXII.197 f.n.8.

a document in the Lekhapaddhati¹, dated V.S. 1288, which mentions Vīśalapriya dvivallaka dramas. He argues : "Vīśaladeva Chaulukya who may be presumed to have issued the coins did not come to the throne of Anahillapāṭaka before V.S. 1298 or so. The throne was occupied up to V.S. 1296 at least by Bhīma-deva II". We may point out that Vīśaladeva did not belong to the Caulukya dynasty of Gujarat and so the dates for Bhīma II or any other Caulukya king do not preclude those for Vīśaladeva. Vīśaladeva, who belonged to the Vāghela branch related to the imperial Caulukya family, long occupied the status of feudatories of the Caulukyās even though the Vāghelas established themselves as the de facto rulers of Gujarat. Lavana-prasāda of the Vāghela family is known to have entered into a treaty with the Yādava king Sindhava before 1231 A.D. He soon retired and authority was then vested in his son Vīradhavalā who is found assisting his father in battle and administration much earlier. It is not unlikely that Viśvamalla (Vīśala) and Vīrama participated in royal authority with their father Vīradhavalā. We do not know how long Vīradhavalā ruled. But in any case we find Vīrama ruling as a feudatory of Bhīma II

1. p.42 - Śrīśrīmāliyakharataṅkaśālāhata-triḥparikṣita-hattavyavahārikya-pracarat-dreṣṭhadvivallakya-vīśalapriyadra .

in 1239 A.D., and a colophon of a manuscript of the Yogasāstra, said to have been written during the reign of Viśaladeva, bears the date 1238 A.D. (V.S. 1295)¹. So it is not improbable that Viśala was ruling and even minted some coins even earlier, in 1234 A.D.

But this is not to suggest that all the documents which bear the date V.S. 1288 were in fact drafted in that year. On the other hand we must brush aside the other extreme suggestion that all the drafts are mere models written in the fifteenth century while the date V.S. 1288 is often put where it should not be.² It is not unlikely that the author of the Lekhapaddhati had some genuine documents drafted in V.S. 1288 and that in order to complete his account he prepared model documents and put the date V.S. 1288 or 802 without ascertaining whether such a date was historically appropriate.

In discussing the date of the text we have to keep in mind certain general considerations. It is obvious that the locale of the text is Gujarat. This appears above all from a number of terms in the text which are nearer to Gujarati than to Sanskrit and which can be easily explained by the Gujarati

1. See Struggle for Empire, pp.79f.

2. J.N.S.I., XXII.197 f.n.8.

usage.¹ The names of the localities, kings and coins mentioned in the text also support it.

It would appear that in the early mediaeval period great attention was paid to letter-writing, and there were more or less fixed forms of different types of document. It is interesting to note that the Uktivyaktiprakarana by Dāmodara Paṇḍita, who was associated with the Gṛhaḍavāla court, devotes its last section to the forms of different types of letters and documents. Unfortunately the text of his own commentary on this section has not been recovered. Otherwise it would have served as a valuable confirmation to check the authenticity of the documents in the Lekhapaddhati. In any case the last section of the Uktivyaktiprakarana makes a case for the genuineness of the Lekhapaddhati.

A study of the internal evidence of the Lekhapaddhati also supports the suggestion that most of the documents reflect the institutions in Gujarat under the Caulukyas and the Vāghelas.

In the first instance it may be pointed out that the Lekhapaddhati shows that a common feature of the administres-

1. Preface, p. vii.

tive machinery of its period was the prevalence of the pañcākulas, which were groups of people associated with different grades of officers. We find that in the inscriptions of the Chaulukyas also there are many references to pañcākulas performing similar functions.¹

Besides the pañcākulas we have in some documents of the Lekhapaddhati, intended to serve as models for the sale of houses and female slaves, a reference to pañcamukhanagara. It appears that in these cases it was necessary to inform the pañcamukhanagara before these transactions were finalised.² In another document called dharmasīrikā, which was meant to serve like the modern affidavit as an affirmation on oath, the accused declares that he has shown himself as guiltless as the moon ~~is~~ to the pañcamukhanagara.³ It is interesting to note that the ~~p~~ existence of the pañcamukhanagara and its position ~~i~~ in the local administration is confirmed by the Anavada inscription of the reign of Sāraṅgadeva.⁴ When the money granted by the karana and the customs house and the private donations and

1. A.K. Majumdar, Chaulukyas of Gujarat, pp. 236ff.

2. pp. 35, 36.

3. p. 16.

4. Bhavanagar Inscriptions, p. 158. Cf. A.K. Majumdar, *Op. cit.*, p. 232 sq.

contributions had proved insufficient for fulfilling the original purpose of the grants, the pañcamukhanagara of Palhanpur came together and imposed certain taxes. According to this inscription the pañcamukhanagara was composed of the pañsakula, the purohitas, the mahājanas, the vanījyārakas and the nau-vittakas.

Again the Lekhapaddhati has a characteristic way of introducing the period when a transaction is said to have taken place. It refers not only to the ruling king but also to the chief minister (mahāmātya) in office. It has a fixed phraseology of introducing the mahāmātya.¹ It is significant that this very method of introducing the minister in the introducing the minister in the introductory part of the inscription with identical expressions is found in the Caulukya inscriptions of the twelfth century.²

Another identical expression found alike in the Lekhapaddhati³ and the Caulukya inscriptions⁴ refers to the territo-

1. pp. 2, 5, 17, 33, 34 - tanniyukta-mahāmātya....śrīśrīkarapādi-samastamudrāvyāpārān paripanthayati satī.
2. I.A., XVIII p. 343 ll. 5f.
3. p. 2 - tadvibhoh prasādapattalāyām bhujiyamānabhīmapallī-mandalakarane; p. 5 - prabhoh prasādānmahāmāndalādhipati-rānakasrīlāvanyadevaprāsādēna prasādapattalāyām bhujiyamānakhatakādhārapathake; p. 33 - tadvibhoh prasādapattalāyām bhujiyamānāśricandrāvatīkarane.
4. I.A., XVIII p. 113 ll. 19-23 - asya prabhoh prasādāvāpta-pattalāyām bhujiyamāna-śrīśaurāṣṭramandale.

rial unit in which the transaction takes place. In these the village granted is described as being enjoyed by a certain officer who is said to have received it through the favour of the overlord.

Leaving aside the common names of administrative officers we find that even some of the unusual ones occurring in the documents of the Lekhapaddhati are mentioned in epigraphic records belonging to the Gujarat area in the early mediaeval times. We may mention here deśa-thakkura¹, bhattaputra², talāra³, hindīpaka⁴ and pratisāra⁵. Of these deśa-thakkura and bhattaputra are mentioned in an inscription of Ajayapāla's reign.⁶ In the Lekhapaddhati bhattaputra is mentioned as meaning a soldier. In an inscription from Nadol⁷ bhattaputra, bhāta and dauvārika are mentioned in the same context which suggests that bhattaputra is to be distinguished from bhāta or barda and probably referred to a soldier. It is interesting that the Lekhapaddhati also uses the term in the same sense. Talāra

1. p. 8.

2. pp. 15, 20.

3. p. 8.

4. p. 8.

5. p. 8.

6. I.A., XVIII p. 82.

7. E.I., XI p. 37.

is also mentioned in some of the inscriptions.¹ It is explained as nagara-raksaka in the Deśināmamālā² of Hemacandra which also belongs to the Gujarat region. A Kadi grant of Bhīma II³ mentions hithipaka and pratisāraka as officers responsible for collecting certain taxes. A.K.Majumdar⁴ seems right in suggesting that as this part of the inscription is very mutilated it is not unlikely that hithipaka is a misreading for hindīpaka.

It is also to be noted that an identical use of an archaic expression can be noticed in the Lekhapaddhati and the early mediaeval records. Thus in the Lekhapaddhati⁵ potaka or pottaka is used in the sense of treasury. This very use of the term pottaka is to be noticed in the Cintā Praśastī⁶ of Śaṅgadeva.

From the inscriptions of the early mediaeval period of the Gujarat region we learn that the administrative units were maṇḍalas, viṣayas, and pathakas.⁷ In the Lekhapaddhati also we find many references to maṇḍala⁸ and pathakas⁹ and viṣaya is

1. I.A., LVI p. 10; Poona Orientalist, III p. 69.

2. V.3.

3. I.A., VI p. 202.

4. Op. cit., p. 235.

5. p. 25.

6. E.I., I p. 278 v.63.

7. A.K.Majumdar, Op. cit., pp. 208ff.

8. p. 10.

9. A.K.Majumdar, Op. cit., p. 212.

also implied in one of the documents.¹

The introductory verses in the Lekhapaddhati envisage 32 departments (karanas) in the administration.² As rightly pointed out by A.K.Majumdar³ it is highly improbable that the verses giving the names of the karanas belong to the Muslim period and must have been composed during the Caulukya or any of the earlier periods. It is significant that of these karanas we have in the Caulukya inscriptions specific reference to at least three (Śrī-karana, Vijaya-karana and Deva-karana) though a few more are also implied.⁴

The Lekhapaddhati uses the term pāṭṭalā for a charter bestowing a fief. We find it associated with assignments whether made to a rāṇaka and consisting of a deśa or to a rāja-putra and concerning a village.⁵ From this it was easy for the term to be changed to mean a fief and in some places the text has such a usage.⁶ It is to be noted that Jonaraja uses the term in connection with the assignments of land to thakkura

1. p. 7.

2. p. 1.

3. Op. cit., pp. 220f.

4. Ibid.

5. p. 7.

6. pp. 2, 50, 33.

~~thakur~~ chiefs.¹ We have seen elsewhere that pattalā appears as the name of an administrative unit in the Gāhaḍavāla, Kalauri and Candella records.² It is not known which of these two usages of the term is earlier. We would suggest that pattalā meaning a charter recording the grant of a fief, or a fief itself came to designate an administrative unit from the fact that under a certain dynasty territories of a certain approximate area were originally or generally given as feudal assignments. In any case it is clear that the Lekhapaddhati should not be far removed in date from the dynasties whose inscriptions refer to pattalās.³

The Lekhapaddhati uses the term rājaputra in the sense of a feudal chief who received a village and owed military obligations to his overlord.⁴ It is well known that in late mediaeval times the term came to acquire the meaning of a separate social group of kṣatriyas living in modern Rajasthan. We know that in the early mediaeval times the inscriptions of northern India generally use the term rājaputra in the sense of a title which carried with it the enjoyment of the right

1. Rājataranginī (N.S.P., 1892) p. 116.

2. See *supra* pp. 196-99.

3. For pattalā in a Calukya inscription see I.A., XVIII p.113 11.19-23.

4. p. 13.

to some fief. This also yields a strong argument to fix the date of the Lekhapaddhati in the early mediaeval period.

A.K.Majumdar¹ has made a detailed analysis of the documents in the Lekhapaddhati which concern the credit system of those times. He has shown that these are evidently based on the rules about loans, mortgages and deposits in the Smṛti texts. It is clear that after the establishment of the Muslim rule in these areas such a complete conformity to the provisions of the Smṛtis could not be expected. Thus we may draw the conclusion that these documents pertain to a period before the occupation of Gujarat by the Muslims, when under a Hindu administration the credit laws in the Smṛtis were followed faithfully.

Here we may mention an interesting epigraphic evidence supporting the authenticity of the Lekhapaddhati. In the documents recording credit transactions in our text we always get a typical expression introducing the merchant as one who invests his money by lending it on interest.² In a brick inscription from Jaunpur³, which records the mortgage of a field, the identical expression is used for the man who gives

1. Chaulukyas of Gujarat, pp. 274ff.

2. pp. 21, 37f - lābhaya svadhanam prayunkte.

3. J.U.P.H.S., XVIII.196.

the loan on the mortgage.

The names of the coins recorded in the Lekhapaddhati also serve as a pointer to its date. In these documents the transactions are recorded in terms of drammas¹ which are sometimes specifically mentioned as being Viśvamallapriya or Viśalapriya drammas² or pāraupatha or pārupathaka drammas³. It is to be noted that coin names like jītal or taṅkas which became common in the Muslim period are nowhere mentioned in these documents. The testimony of inscriptions and literary works alike leaves no doubt whatsoever that dramma was the common name for the coins in the early mediaeval period. As we have pointed out coins called Viśalapriya drammas were struck by the Vāghela king Viśaladeva. For the pāruttha drammas also we have references which indicate that it was in common use in Rājasthan, Malwa, Gūjarat and northern Mahārāstra.⁴ There are two references to its use in the Kharataragaccha-brhadgurvāvalī⁵ in connection respectively with the reigns of Durlabharāja Caulukya and Naravarman of Malwa. It is also referred to in the Purāṇasprabandhasaṅgraha.⁶ Pāruttha drammas

1. p. 34.

2. pp. 33, 37, 39, 42, 55.

3. pp. 34, 35, 36f, 41f, 43.

4. J.N.S.I., XXII p. 196.

5. pp. 2, 13.

6. I.H.Q., XXVI p. 224 f.n.4.

are mentioned in the Lonada (Kalyan, Bombay) inscription of Aparāditya II dated Śaka 1106 and Chhangī (Konkan) inscription of Somsāvara dated Śaka 1182¹. It is thus clear that the Lekhapaddhati takes into consideration the coins which are known to have been in circulation towards the close of the early mediaeval period.

A study of the specimens of land-grants contained in the Lekhapaddhati also vindicates the genuineness of the text. The form of these grants, the sequence of their different portions, their style, the phrases and terms used, the privileges which the king possessed and granted to the donee, the practice of enumerating many titles of the donor king and the imprecatory verses all indicate that they were either genuine documents or else were based on the actual land-grants of the early mediaeval period. In most cases in enumerating the rights and privileges accompanying the grant the copper plates of early mediaeval Gujarat are found using the expression vrkṣa-mālākula-kāṣṭha-trṇodakopetaḥ sa-hiranya-bhāga-bhogah sa-daṇḍadaśāparādhaḥ sarva-dāya-sametah nava-nidhāna-sametah pūrva-pradatta-devadāya-brahmadāya-varjīam². We may compare

1. J.N.S.I., XVII p. 75.

2. A.K.Majumdar, Op. cit., pp. 247f.

it with the corresponding expressions which in one of the documents in the Lekhapaddhati¹ are sa-vrksa-mālākulaḥ sa-kāṣṭha-trṇodakopetaḥ sarva-svīya-sīmopeto nava-nidhāna-sahitaḥ pūrvarūḍhyā palamāna-deva-brahmadāya-varjjam.

It is obvious that after the establishment of the Muslim rule in Gujarat the official records, despatches, accounts, receipts and orders could not have been in Sanskrit. It would therefore have been really difficult to a man in the fifteenth century to draft the official documents in the Lekhapaddhati if he had no access to authentic documents of the early mediæval period. The terse matter-of-fact phraseology of these and the frequent use of abbreviations go a long way to establish the authenticity of these records. That these records mostly date to a period a little earlier than the establishment of Muslim rule will follow from a document which speaks of a girl selling herself into slavery during a famine resulting from a Muslim invasion. It would appear that the author did not belong to the period when the Muslims had established themselves as rulers, but knew the devastations and ruins which visited the land as a result of their first invasions.

It may therefore be concluded that a large number of the

documents in the Lekhapaddhati are authentic ones belonging to the early years of the thirteenth century. It is however to be recognised that the dates are arbitrary in some cases and so are not reliable for the purposes of political history. It may be suggested that in some cases where the real date was not known one of the stock dates was used. The possibility however cannot be ruled out that the compiler of the text in the fifteenth century drafted some specimens for certain types of documents which he could not procure. But this only partially affects the merit of the text as a source for our period, especially for institutional history, which in any case does not appear to have changed radically in the next few centuries.

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